

**AT OUR SERVICE?**

**The public service ethos in community  
safety partnerships**

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## **Abstract**

The public service ethos (PSE) has spent thirty years - since the advent of New Public Management - in flux. In the late 1990s, partnership working appeared to offer an alternative to NPM, as part of a perceived shift to network governance. What impact has partnership and network governance had on the PSE?

This study looked at two case studies of Community Safety Partnerships (CSPs) operating under different local governance conditions. It interviewed public servants within these CSPs on their experiences of partnership working, and perceptions around public service itself.

What emerged is a picture of partial network governance, with each case study taking a different approach and yielding different structures and outcomes. While the public servants were professional and committed, they were loyal to their field of work and individual clients. In the recent decades, public interest and consideration of wider societal impact has been removed from everyday working; what remains is a vacuum. The neo-liberal view – that satisfying individual client need creates societal benefit when aggregated – has taken root.

PSE is now a partial concept: it remains altruistic but without the core of wider, deeper thinking required. While network governance could ameliorate this trend, the partial and limited implementation of the concept by government means that it hinders PSE as much as it fosters it.

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## INTRODUCTION

### **Background to thesis**

The thesis explores developments and changes in the ‘public service ethos’ (PSE); that is, the attitudes and behaviour of public servants towards the role they play and the services they provide. It does this to establish how PSE sits within current governance and public policy, and how it is affected by an environment of partnership working.

The research uses two case studies of Community Safety Partnerships in England and Wales. Unlike many PSE studies (Rainey & Bozeman 2000, Merali 2003), it focuses mainly on front-line staff. It explores PSE in a multi-agency partnership setting; it also looks at the influence of network governance on PSE. This has not been attempted before: it therefore allows an analysis of how partnership working interacts with the ethos behind public services.

The two case studies have been selected primarily for offering differing governance structures as part of their context. One case study is a loose partnership in a unitary authority area, reporting mainly to regional government. The other case study is a tight, co-located partnership that is a quasi-organisation, reporting to national government and covering a myriad of local authority areas. The differing contexts allow analysis of how governance influences the state of PSE. Details of the choice of case studies are in Chapter Five; details of the case studies themselves are laid out in chapters Six and Seven.

The research explores how the structure of governance - and the shift from local government to government - has a significant effect on the current PSE. Does the nature of partnerships influence the degree of innovation and autonomy? Does the extent of network governance denotes thinking on matters of trust and accountability? Does the overall government stress on performance and efficiency infantilise staff, driving out consideration of the public interest and of longer, wider thinking? If so, would this damage not only PSE, but public services themselves?



The research uses semi-structured interviews with 34 interviewees throughout hierarchical levels and units of the partnerships. It links these interview questions to both theoretical definitions of network governance and PSE, and to subsequent analysis - in order to explore the nature of the relationship between them, and the extent of their influence on staff. It therefore reflects the subjective experience of public servants, while remaining rooted in academic understanding.

These responses are grouped together into dimensions of PSE and network governance – dimensions that are drawn from literature and theory. These dimensions are then grouped into discussion areas – again distilled from theory – to allow analysis of their cross-cutting connections and influences. Further details of this process are in Chapter Five.

## **PSE – its place and contribution in the modern setting**

In preparing a study of PSE, the question must be asked as to why, in present day public services, PSE matters?

There are many reasons why PSE matters: some are internal to shaping and delivering public services, or are simply pragmatic. For example, PSE offers a source of motivation to staff facing budget cuts and pay freezes. PSE provides a stabilising philosophy in periods of uncertainty and change, rooting staff and their service delivery in a common framework that is steady over time. PSE connects public servants to the recipients (and funders) of that service, with an implicit belief that services will be provided fairly, equably, without profit or personal gain, and with integrity.

All of these reasons matter, but they are not the most important reason. The biggest contribution PSE makes is to lift public services beyond the immediate – further than job description or unit, electoral timescales or this year's budget. PSE allows – *requires* – wider and longer-term thinking than notions of efficiency and performance (Elcock 2013). For PSE to operate there must permanently be consideration of societal benefit and the public good, altruistic motivation, and universality of service provision. PSE makes public services better, because it changes the thinking of public servants about public services.

The research in this thesis will demonstrate that such thinking is not taking place: PSE is not evident in this sense. Workers assume managers are considering these wider and longer issues; managers assume it is implicit in the strategizing and democratic mandate of government; but government is thinking about short-term performance, 24-hour news headlines, and the next election.

Therefore, no-one is doing this kind of thinking.

Instead, an individualistic society and managerialist government have created a focus on the short-term, the measurable and the immediate (Newman 2001). Public servants assume that individual professionalism towards the client in hand, when aggregated, creates societal gain. This ignores the wider implications of overlapping policy,

unintended consequences, and the need for strategic thinking and overarching philosophy to drive public services.

This issue is graphically illustrated by a hypothetical scenario presented to many interviewees. Working in a welfare office, they are faced by someone who has found a job, but needs £500 today. This pays off a short-term loan, buys a bicycle to travel to work, and covers bills up to the first pay cheque. The interviewee was asked if they would pay the money.

The scenario presents a classic dilemma. The money would clearly benefit the individual right now; with consequences of paid employment, contribution to tax revenue, improved family life. However, paying £500 would be without checks, balances, further information, consideration of other clients, understanding of the office's budget situation, consideration of equity or fairness or queue-jumping; it would ignore wider and longer implications than solving the problems of the individual client.

Responses are explored more fully in chapters Six to Nine inclusive, but can be summarised here. Not only did interviewees not have an answer; they had clearly never been asked this kind of question. Public services do not consider this kind of dilemma, because they are focused on “doing good” being an aggregate of individual service.

Studying PSE takes research beyond querying whether public servants want ‘to do good’. It looks at what ‘good’ they might do, may be allowed to do, are judged upon, or have the autonomy to create. It assesses the state of public services by asking questions about the context in which those services are delivered: this is why PSE matters.

## **From patrician to pragmatism - the development of the PSE**

PSE evolved from patrician views of the nineteenth century (LeGrand 2003, in Hoggett *et al* 2006), including prevailing ideas about deciding what is ‘in the best interest’ of society as a whole. Alongside this were (Beauman 1989, in DuGay 2008) notions of bureaucracy and public service ethical behaviour: impartiality, public interest, equality of service provision, and absence of a profit motive (Pratchett and Wingfield 1996).

The traditional concept of PSE subsequently struggled to incorporate social and governmental changes. But PSE retains crucial elements that can explain issues such as unintended policy consequences, resistance to private sector involvement, and on-going public support for public services.

PSE has evolved and become more nuanced, as new concepts such as privatisation came to the fore. Once the post-war consensus broke down in the 1970s, the nature of public service delivery changed (O’Toole 2006). With this change PSE theory adapted, offering comparisons with the private and voluntary sectors. More attention was paid to alternative forms of accountability, calculating societal benefit, how to demonstrate trust (Plant 2003). Theory needed, by the 1990s, to operate within a changing framework of semi-marketised, partnership-led, fragmented public services (Pratchett and Wingfield 1996). At the same time PSE came under pressure as a concept – it was argued altruism could be displayed by anyone (Public Administration Committee 2002), and the public sector was not necessarily the best way to deliver public services (Brereton and Temple 1999).

Yet PSE remains a political construct; i.e. it means different things to different people, depending on circumstance, philosophy, or time. Commentators such as Farnham and Horton (1996), Pratchett and Wingfield (1996), O’Toole (2006) have suggested definitions of varying adjectives, contexts and emphasis. While definitions can be drawn, it should be remembered that PSE remains ‘in the eye of the beholder’. Those supporting PSE draw from ideas of patrician concern, societal cohesion, and community.

## **Wicked solutions to wicked issues - the development of network governance**

In examining the resilience of PSE, the thesis explores how network governance has shaped PSE. How these concepts relate to each other has not been studied before; this study builds on existing research in both fields.

By the 1990s, established means of delivery (hierarchy, or quasi-market) were shown to have limitations (Rhodes 1996). Network governance was posited (both by New Labour in the mid-1990s, and by commentators such as Rhodes, Bevir and Stoker) as an answer to 'wicked issues' - supranational power and influence; the complexity of modern life; coping with externalities of untrammelled markets; the potential sclerosis of hierarchy.

Where network governance feeds into PSE is that both are about public service delivery. There are areas of potential overlap (at least theoretically) and areas of influence between the concepts. The nature and direction of governance impacts upon aspects of PSE directly: for example autonomy, altruism, flexibility, motivation, or the extent of trust. But PSE has previously been viewed in isolation from the impact of governance.

Network governance has its critics (Dowding 2001, Newman 2001), who state that it cannot display sufficient explanatory or predictive reach; it is only comfortable describing what occurs, and struggles with analysis. But network governance has gained considerable ground – both in development of the theory, and in its citing in public policies such as partnership working - alongside the linked concept of policy networks. As such, it provides a potential prism for studying public sector developments.

## **Studying PSE with network governance – a new approach**

The thesis seeks to combine network governance and PSE. It uses a practical example of public policy that was overtly intended to use network governance principles: the Labour government's flagship policy of Community Safety Partnerships (CSPs). Using two case studies of CSPs the thesis looks at PSE, and how PSE might be influenced by a network governance context.

PSE is often considered in terms of individual motivations and behaviours (Haqle 2007), or by contrasting it with the ethos of the private sector or voluntary sector (Becker and Connor 2005). In the former, there is a problem assuming individual motivations can be aggregated, and that motivations translate into an ethos unhindered. In the latter, there is a problem in defining something by defining what it is not; this might miss vital facets, or underplay their importance. Focusing on what the PSE *is* would give a greater insight: therefore, this study talks to individuals, asking them about their perceptions of organisation and partnership, as well as their individual circumstances.

Research exploring PSE has often looked at senior management of organisations (Stackman *et al* 2006, Merali 2003) as a proxy for the entire organisation. In this thesis most attention is paid to staff delivering services – what Lipsky (1980) termed 'street-level bureaucrats' – where real life creates different issues than those envisaged by policy makers or senior management. In particular, there is a messier reality in combining services into partnerships or networks, than foreseen by the models developed at policy level. 'Unintended consequences' form a vital part of the reality of policy delivery, but may be unknown or under-estimated at management level.

Studies of network governance – even those focused on partnerships – often looked only at local government and formal network arrangements for such matters as strategic planning (Howlett 2002). These partnerships often follow tight government edict about structure and operation, with little difference between partnerships. In this thesis, the selected case studies explored two very different CSPs – the differences in contextual setting, structures, and relationships with and between partner bodies, enable a rich and deep understanding of PSE. CSPs offer a number of suitable aspects for examination –

- \* local: examining how national policy and governance is reflected at a specific level where results and outcomes can be seen
- \* focused on service delivery: emphasising results for communities, rather than inter-departmental work
- \* contain a range of public servants from many different organisations: allowing exploration of both legacy cultures and emergent partnership culture
- \* given some freedom to organise to suit local conditions: allowing for potential diversity between case studies and the influence of local factors
- \* specifically intended by government to exhibit many facets of network governance (rather than accidentally or partially): therefore allows an examination of this policy intent in reality

The research looks at CSPs because the newly elected government in 1997 spoke explicitly of using networks to drive services provision (Newman 2001) – government action therefore meshes with network governance theory. CSPs represented deliberate policy measures to develop network governance, and continue to operate under the coalition government.

## **Research aims**

The aims of the research are to:

- a) assess the current (2009/10) state of PSE, using staff from CSPs – the study provides current thinking about PSE based on personal views of staff within CSPs. This will establish the nature, extent, degree of influence and developmental history of PSE within their context.
- b) investigate the extent to which the case study CSPs exhibit theoretical notions of network governance. The extent to which this occurs matters for two reasons. Firstly, for wider inference to be drawn about the role of network governance, its limits in this context must be understood. Secondly, the varying strengths of elements of network governance give an insight into how they have influenced PSE.
- c) assess the impact of variables within partnership, including network governance, on PSE. This brings the two threads together, to assess how partnership working has influenced PSE. This includes analysis of the influence of other factors impinging upon PSE, and comparison with voluntary sector staff within the same environment.

Two case studies were selected on the basis of governance arrangements, demographic context, and organisational structure. Further details of the case studies and their selection are included in Chapter Five. A sample of staff from each case study area was interviewed, using a semi-structured interview process. The interview questions are a distillation of current theory - this forms the basis of subsequent analysis, producing linkage of argument and evidence from beginning to end. Interviewee responses were analysed employing NVivo software, using inductive techniques to build up a picture of their perceptions. These were analysed in a series of 'discussion areas', leading to overall conclusions. Further details of the methodology can be found in Chapter Five.



## **Research question**

The thesis seeks to examine the current state of PSE, and its influence from network governance. The development of CSPs shapes the time frame. The research question is:

*What is the nature of the PSE in 2009/10, the extent of network governance within Community Safety Partnerships, and the potential impact of network governance arrangements upon the PSE?*

## Structure of thesis

**Chapter One** explores the PSE – it looks at previous theoretical definitions, and the ways in which PSE can be evidenced. It draws together theoretical thinking and writing on PSE to establish a composite PSE definition, for the purposes of this study

**Chapter Two** looks at governance and the development of network governance – it begins with Weberian thinking and wider notions of bureaucracy and its role. It expands this into a contextualised analysis of the breakdown of post-war consensus, and rise of New Public Management. It then investigates the development of network governance, as a possible solution to perceived limitations of existing governance. After elaborating on critiques of network governance, it assesses recent developments from network governance advocates. Finally, it produces from academic literature a composite definition of network governance, for the purposes of this study.

**Chapter Three** seeks to pull together the two elements. It does so by exploring both parallels and differences between the two concepts. It then contextualizes this, within the changing face of politics and public policy in the late 1990s, as CSPs emerged. Having set the scene, it then explores potential gaps in knowledge – some of which will be addressed by this study.

**Chapter Four** looks at the specific context of the development of CSPs – this is the setting of the case studies which form the research of this study. It analyses the development of crime reduction policy through the 1980s and 1990s, noting the limitations and shift in perspective towards the latter end of this period. It then analyses the integration of new ideas about crime policy and its wider connections, with the political necessities and choices of an incoming government. Finally, it assesses the way in which CSPs were introduced, and subsequent government attitudes towards them.

*It should be noted at this point that Chapters One to Four provide the necessary academic literature and background associated with a traditional 'Literature Review'. However the referencing and analysis of theory is presented differently in this study. These four chapters constantly place theory in a wider context – particularly the political context. This is because the study – and the case studies it uses – always needs to consider the context as a vital part of its thinking. The concepts of PSE and network*

*governance cannot be divorced from the context which drove them, and influences them still: hence, the approach taken here is not to provide a stand-alone review of literature, but to place that analysis within a wider setting.*

**Chapter Five** focuses on methodology. It explains the ontological background, and the choice of case studies as a research method. It then details why interviews were selected as the means of gathering data. It adds a layer of context to the case studies, before explaining which CSPs were selected as case studies, and why. Finally, it explains how interview questions were formulated (linking with both existing academic theory, and subsequent analysis), and who were selected as interviewees.

**Chapters Six and Seven** comprise the presentation and analysis of data from the study. These are presented in the 28 dimensions of PSE and network governance contained in the composite definitions, organised into nine ‘discussion areas’. Each chapter contains description of interviewee opinion, including direct quotes where relevant, and analysis of meaning. Chapter Six does this for the Carmarthenshire CSP, and Chapter Seven for Derby City CSP.

**Chapter Eight** draws this evidence together for the analysis of the results across dimensions, and across the two case studies. It does so by assessing each of the nine discussion areas in turn, allowing comparison of the two case studies, and the implications of the evidence. This links back to the academic theory that drove the composite definitions, the interview questions, and the subsequent organisation of the analysis.

**Chapter Nine** widens and deepens the analysis, drawing overall conclusions for PSE, network governance, and the connections and influences between them. After consideration of the wider implications for PSE and network governance, the chapter offers some ideas about the future of PSE in both academic and public policy terms.

## **CHAPTER ONE – EXPLORING THE PUBLIC SERVICE ETHOS**

### **Introduction**

The thesis explores the impact on PSE of network governance, using two case studies of Community Safety Partnerships (CSPs): these provide direct comparison between two partnerships established by identical legislation for identical reasons, which have developed in different ways within a different political landscape.

In Chapters Three and Four, PSE will be linked more closely to governance (especially network governance), and the CSPs will be placed into context.

In this chapter, PSE as a concept will be examined, and a definition of PSE explained and set out. This chapter introduces many concepts to be used subsequently in the definition, research and data analysis.

In Section 1 there is an analysis of previous definitions of PSE, and the traits that drive it; there is also a recognition that PSE is wider than a series of characteristics. In Section 2 there is a comparison between PSE and values associated with both the private and voluntary sectors – illumination by contrast. In Section 3 these threads are drawn together to show how a working definition – for the purposes of this research – is established. This definition outlines the sixteen dimensions of PSE used in this study.

We begin with an analysis of existing theoretical thinking on what constitutes a PSE, and how this thinking has developed over time and across context.

## **Section 1 – Previous definitions of PSE**

PSE is difficult to define in clear, widely-accepted terms. It means different things to different people because it is intangible and contestable; it varies according to time, context and place. This section looks at the origins of definitions of PSE. In doing so, it identifies a number of dimensions that will constitute the working definition of PSE within this thesis.

The Public Administration Committee (2002, p7) defined an ethos as:

“...a principled framework for action, something that describes the general character of an organisation, but which, and more importantly, should also motivate those who belong to it.”

PSE could be defined by a list of adjectives, outlining the traits that might constitute PSE. This gives broad parameters of the definition, but most of these adjectives may be value-laden, or subjective: for example ‘loyalty’ might be to colleagues, tradition, the public, or to political masters.

Farnham and Horton (1996) identify the following as facets of PSE: political neutrality, loyalty, probity, honesty, trustworthiness, fairness, incorruptibility, and serving the public interest. Rouse (1999, in Grimshaw *et al* 2003) lists equity, fairness, community, citizenship, and justice. Pratchett and Wingfield (1996) identify key factors as accountability, public interest, motivation and loyalty. Grimshaw *et al* (2003) note the uniformity of many of these traits. These are checklists of desirable traits – not a full definition.

Brereton and Temple (1999) believe PSE should be about desirable outcomes, not desirable traits or processes: desirable outcomes can also stem from neutral or ‘undesirable’ traits. In Brereton and Temple’s view, the result for the community/society is the key – how problems are approached is less important.

Some attempts have been made to define PSE by examining what it is not; or what has changed over time. Haqle (2007) distinguishes between key elements of PSE (accountability, professionalism, probity, public interest) and private sector values (efficiency, customer focus). Thompson (2006) focuses on ‘eroded’ elements of PSE such as discretion to act in the public interest, collective orientation, and institutional cohesion. Thompson (2006) also sets PSE in a larger framework of ‘logic of action’ – patterns of behaviour drawn from institutional rules and norms.

Plant (2003) felt the most important element of PSE was trust. Plant defines trust as being about day-to-day contact. By this he means the outcome of individual and direct contact, where the sense of trust is rooted in a personal interaction and based on direct evidence. Confidence, by contrast, is rooted in citizen/government interaction and based on overall performance and perceived competence: no personal or direct involvement may have occurred. Plant distinguished several types of trust, all influencing the prevailing ethos, as that between:

- citizens and public organisations;
- government and citizens;
- government and public sector;
- public servants;
- public sector and potential partners;
- and as implicit in the nature of the product or service

Plant argued that contractual arrangements (common in public/private partnerships) implied a lack of trust, and invited declining levels of trust. He argued PSE was undermined in public/private partnership, through the erosion of trust inherent in reliance on contractual terms.

Plant misses a vital component – the trust of public servants in government. Public service depends on the nexus of public servants and politicians: their sense of trust is relevant to how public services are delivered. Since public servants have many aspects of their work controlled by politicians, it is important that there is two-way trust. Plant acknowledges the importance of public servants accepting oversight of what they do – to ensure work is not captured by producer interests, and that public service is an

efficient use of public resources. But in return public servants need to trust government to deliver fair treatment, accept their own public accountability, and be consistent in decisions and policies. A lack of any of these undermines the trust of public officials, the credibility of politicians, and the ability to infuse delivery with a PSE (O'Toole 2006). The ethos is undermined if:

- public servants need to consider unduly their own personal position;
- they feel held accountable for decisions beyond their control; or
- work is constantly changed for political reasons.

Pratchett and Wilson (1996) focus on changes within the PSE. These include appropriate accountability; a collegiate sense of government; loyalty towards community rather than individuals; acceptance of bureaucratic rules and procedures. They also identified then-new or emerging themes – the absence of a profit motive; greater innovation; more transparency; and a greater dedication to high-quality services.

Some commentators assert that the PSE must be a political construct, because it operates in a political context. Pratchett and Wingfield (1996) note the PSE is a political institution; it aggregates values and beliefs of professionals into a coherent culture. This may explain PSE's durability despite public sector reforms and political change, but runs the risk of demoting PSE to simply an aspect of organisational culture. It may be that PSE exhibits sufficiently common themes across time and sector, to be more than an output of an organisation's culture. If this is the case, it moves beyond a simple normative appeal to defend labour market behaviour: it is wider, deeper and more influential than this. Instead, it becomes an integral part of a worker's armoury and toolkit, both influencing the context around it, and being influenced by it.

It can be seen that PSE cannot be defined simply by a list of traits – it operates within a political environment, changes over time, and contains subjective elements that interact with other facets of public service. This section has broached many of those issues. The next section assesses PSE in terms of comparison – it is a visible ethos that is demonstrably different from the ethos in other fields?

## **Section 2 – Illumination by contrast – PSE against private and voluntary sectors**

The section moves beyond the narrow traits-led aspects of PSE definition in the previous section. It questions whether there is evidence that a distinct, observable ethos exists within public service, which can be separated from the ethos prevailing in other sectors.

Studies indicate that there are differences in attitudes – about the nature of their work and role – by those based in the public, private and voluntary sectors (Boyne 2002, Plant 2003). These show that public service has a different context, political element, moral and ethical choices, and values when compared to business or voluntary work (Hoggett 2006, O’Toole 2006). These differences alone suggest that there is a distinct PSE which can be identified and explored. This is because the differences imply an identifiable underpinning philosophy, management style, approach to service, and belief system, that is - in some way and to some degree - inherent in the public sector. The exact nature and extent of this remains contestable (as do the outcomes and implications), but the basic essence of differences between sectors is well-established – for example Plant (2003), Buelens and Broek (2007), Park *et al* (2008) and Lawton (2004).

Less clear is the idea that worker attitude necessarily exemplifies a distinct ethos. One of the foundations of most PSE definitions is that the worker sets aside personal views, in favour of a wider and altruistic ethos aimed at societal good (Cribb 1997, Farnham and Horton 1996, Public Administration Committee 2002). PSE in this view is a deeper attitude reflecting organisational and individual position, history and memory, professionalisation, hierarchy and structure. PSE may be personal, the argument runs, but is also rooted in (and supported by) organisational structures, values and systems. If this is so, research on worker attitude/motivations is significant but is a part-proxy for evidence of the PSE itself.

The exact nature of PSE is further complicated by the blurring of boundaries between public/private (and public/voluntary). If the PSE is demonstrable within a public sector environment, does this mean that it is diluted or swamped when public and private mix together? This question matters not only because the evidence is mixed, but because it



speaks to the resilience and underlying strength of the ethos, once it is taken out of its 'natural' environment. As public and private domains mingle, PSE may become diluted or mixed with other values (Boyne 2002). In the short-term PSE may remain robust, but possibly undermined in the longer term by greater reliance on fulfilling contractual terms (Grimshaw *et al* 2003, Plant 2003). This suggests a potential alteration of PSE by reliance on New Public Management (NPM)-style performance targets (Brereton and Temple 1999).

The nature of public service - implicit value judgements, ethical dilemmas, and need to consider community-wide issues - makes some kind of ethos inevitable (Public Administration Committee 2002). Without an underpinning philosophy, service delivery would be entirely ad-hoc; based on practical considerations and showing no consistency over time, sector or geography (Hoggett 2006). A critique that there is conservatism inherent in public policy development and implementation, would suggest that this conservatism implies the existence of some form of PSE. In essence, such an argument would reason that the underpinning philosophy mentioned above militates against ad-hoc policy and service delivery, and in favour of consistency and gradual change in these fields.

Some of the argument about PSE concerns its difference from a private-sector value system (Brereton and Temple 1999, McDonough 2006, Kim and Vandenaabeele 2009). However, NPM-style governance uses aspects of private-sector thinking/activity within areas that were once seen as purely public sector, as a way of improving that sector. This trend brings public-and private-sector values into close proximity and conflict. The nexus allows research focusing on the differences between them.

Boyne (2002) started from the viewpoint that no organisation is fully public or fully private: every organisation exists on a continuum which displays more or fewer characteristics and values from each sector. He used the concept of 'publicness' – an attribute combining three semi-independent facets of ownership, funding and control. Every organisation is more or less 'public' depending on the outcome of the three facets. Public organisations (or those with a higher degree of 'publicness') exhibited key attributes in terms of environment, goals, structures and (most importantly for this study) managerial values. Boyne found evidence of a distinctive set of public service

values: less materialistic, less driven by financial reward, stronger desire to serve the public and lower commitment to the organisation (for example, whistle-blowing). Boyne concluded that there was clear evidence of PSE, distinct from private sector values.

A basic value system may be a baseline for developing an ethos, not an ethos in itself. However, some research suggests that inferences about sectoral ethos can be drawn from personal values. Stackman *et al* (2006), Rainey and Bozeman (2000) and Powell *et al* (1997, in Stackman *et al* 2006) have done so, using officials in the USA as respondents.

Stackman *et al* (2006) suggest there is a difference in personal values between public- and private-sector managers. The public sector showed a higher preference for values associated with delayed gratification, competence, personal orientation and family security (supported by Becker and Connor (2005)). Personal values need not equate to an ethos: many other factors are at play both in the individual and the context. But assuming these values translate into an ethos, it implies there is a separate PSE. Also, it suggests that merely translating private sector processes and ideas will not be successful, as they will run counter to the ethos and values of public servants.

Similarly, Rainey and Bozeman (2000) looked at managerial attitudes in public and private spheres. Public managers placed a higher value on accomplishment and intrinsic value of their work than private managers, who were more strongly influenced by higher income (though public managers did not dismiss financial issues entirely). Rainey and Bozeman (2000) noted, however, that motivation levels shown by each group was the same; perhaps they hold a different ethos but can still work together. To co-operate, suggest Rainey and Bozeman (2000), each will have to understand the other ethos, and work with the grain of that ethos. Merali (2003) supports this conclusion, stating that changes in the NHS worked most successfully when seen by managers to be consistent with the existing ethos of the organisation. Buelens and Broeck (2007) emphasised that the crucial determinant appeared to be a commitment to a work-life balance, rather than issues such as pay, intrinsic reward or altruism. They found the disparity in public/private attitudes increased with organisational seniority: possibly work-life balance became more important as seniority increased.

John and Johnson (2008, in Park *et al*) used responses to the *British Social Attitudes Survey* from 1997 and 2005, to investigate the prevalence of the PSE, and how attitudes surrounding might have changed over time. The study used UK evidence and is a longitudinal study offering an idea of how the ethos might have changed since 1997. John and Johnson found a measurable PSE different in character from a private sector view. Adjusting for demographic factors, they found that public sector employees placed a higher value on intrinsic rewards and usefulness to society, and a lower value on being highly-paid; this could not be explained by other variables (for example, the demographic characteristics of those holding these attitudes, such as age, gender, or educational background). Tracking responses over time, they concluded that young people have a stronger sense of their own job being useful to society, suggesting that PSE had increased during this period, especially among young people. This latter point contradicts the age-related findings in Pratchett and Wingfield (1994): as the John and Johnson study relates to post-1997, this may indicate a wider shift in societal attitudes in recent years.

John and Johnson (2008, in Park *et al*) also suggested that the ethos appeared linked to higher job satisfaction, pride in the organisation, and belief that their work was socially useful; but this did not prevent the same respondents being tempted by better-paid work elsewhere, or from resisting working long hours. John and Johnson (2008) concluded that, while an identifiable PSE existed, and could be seen to be growing, it had its practical limits. They felt there was evidence that, because private and public sectors had partly converged, employees felt more free to choose their job according to ethics, thereby placing more importance than before on work values that chimed with their own.

Cribb (1997) makes a point that a PSE is value-laden; a private sector ethos is, in Cribb's view, value-free. Cribb argues public services must make ethical and moral decisions, and cannot do this in a vacuum – decisions must be based on ethical principles, and an ethos that can be understood by all. Marketisation, Cribb argues, is value-free and ethically empty – concerned with efficiency and profit, and does not have to consider moral implications: such moral and ethical limits as exist are imposed on the market by public bodies, or political actors. When this happens, the private

sector experiences some of the political context and dimension of the public sector. Thompson (2006) echoes this point, claiming that market performance is value-free, and so contrasts with wider implications that public sector performance must address.

Grimshaw *et al* (2003) took a different approach; assessing UK public-private partnerships (PPPs) to see how the values of actors within partnerships differed and impacted upon each other. They noted that from the outset there was mutual distrust between the partners, based on a suspicion of motives. The suspicion was based around the public/private differentiation, rather than the mere existence of other parties in a partnership. In this way, it is not *directly* related to the partnership experience within CSPs, but does highlight the potential for partners to bring their legacy attitudes and beliefs to a partnership. While partnership working meant systems became based around contractual obligation, Grimshaw *et al* noted that the basic values of public sector staff remained resilient: a continued rejection of profit motive, and the importance of concepts of altruism and public interest. The study suggested such values were deep-rooted, but did note that the processes, aims, and systems of working altered. They speculated that over time the ethos may become transformed, as organisational architecture changes. This speculation connects to Plant's (2003) point; that contractual relationships ultimately undermine trust and therefore partially damage the PSE.

Brereton and Temple (1999) argue in a similar vein to Grimshaw *et al* – a public and private mix leads to a cross-fertilisation of ethos. They believe that this may lead to private organisations becoming more 'socially aware', through exposure to ethical and moral issues confronting public bodies. The argument is challenged by Bogdanor (1994, in Brereton and Temple 1999), who claims that the idea is illusory; private agencies are accountable for profit not civic-mindedness. This debate centres on the idea that ethos may be permeable (as suggested by Pratchett and Wingfield 1994): ideas may infiltrate and change the pre-existing ethos. Here the commentators argue about whether the private sector can/should change the existing ethos; in the case studies the emphasis is more on the permeability of the PSE to the legacy cultures of those involved in the partnerships. The research explores this permeability of partnership ideas, and legacy thinking from the partnership's donor organisations.

The Public Administration Committee (2002) took up this debate when they assessed the PSE. They identified two ‘myths’ about PSE, at both ends of the spectrum of debate. Firstly the Committee felt that the public sector was not a unique repository of qualities such as selflessness or caring; these could be seen in all walks of life, and the quality of management or degree of competition often mattered more than the existence (or absence) of a profit motive. Secondly the Committee argued that PSE was not fantasy; there *is* something unusual in public service (not least in accountability, equity, access and moral dimension of decisions); this should be reflected in government thinking (p13):

“It does matter what a public service is, and what matters is that it works as a public service...the public realm, of collectively provided services and functions, needs to be recognised for what it is – an essential component of a good society.”

The Committee concluded that PSE was a vital outcome from the culture of the organisation, and so organisational culture was the critical factor (rather than public/private/voluntary sector).

Comparisons with the private sector can demonstrate aspects of the PSE such as traits, permeability, dynamics of ethos change over time, and the impact of seniority. Comparisons with the voluntary sector offer equally interesting – though different – insights.

If the distinction between profit-making and non-profit is the crucial factor in determining the ethos, this implies the voluntary sector should hold a very similar ethos to the PSE. Commentators argue this is not the case: the differences therefore give an insight into what defines PSE.

Plant (2003, p560) looks at intrinsic differences between the public service and voluntary sector. Such differences include:

- voluntary sector is aimed at specific need, not general provision or overall social utility

- service offered by the voluntary sector is not a right; the voluntary sector retains choice about service provision or its withdrawal/refusal; the recipient does not have rights over this, or how the service is delivered
- voluntary sector does not have to be impartial (though it often is); therefore there is less of an imperative towards public trust (in the specific sense of ‘faith in impartiality’)
- role of professional expertise/ professionalism is less obvious in the voluntary sector; this does not mean they lack professionalism in what they do, but that professionalism plays a less overt role in their organisational culture

These differences are significant. The voluntary sector may share important attributes with public service in terms of ethos (e.g. altruism, selflessness, an absence of a profit motive), but differences in conditions explain why the ethos’ are not identical. While both operate in a political realm, public service has additional obligations to political neutrality, commitment to universal service, and the rights of service recipients and the accountabilities this implies.

These studies uncover a fundamental paradox in understanding and accounting for the PSE. The studies ask managers about personal values, using these as a proxy for the ethos of their organisation. This may be applicable to the private sector, which does not have to consider the same wider morality, equality, accessibility or ethical arguments as the public sector. But commentators such as Denhardt and Denhardt (2000), Haque (2007) or DuGay (2008), amongst others, acknowledge that part of PSE is the notion of the public servant setting aside personal opinions and political beliefs, in the broader pursuit of the public good. Is it then appropriate to take a public servant’s personal values as evidence for (or against) the existence of a PSE?

While setting aside political loyalties in pursuance of societal good is a key function of a PSE, research need not assume that personal values equate to a PSE. Instead, the research can ask respondents about their personal experiences, beliefs and attitudes, and how these have translated into action. In doing so, the research can explore the respondent’s belief in the notions underpinning a PSE, but also interpret what they say and how it has been implemented. It is not assumed that there is a link or causality

between personal values and PSE, but instead opens up an exploration of the boundary and gaps between the two, and what this might imply.

In addition, an organisation's ethos is more than simply the sum of individual values – the organisation has culture, context, history and organisational memory. Aggregates of personal values are just that – they are not an exact match to the prevailing ethos, but a rough measure in lieu of direct evidence of such an ethos. The problem becomes sharper when considering that these personal values are elicited in an artificial situation – i.e. not evidenced through examples of working practice. It would surely be more relevant to consider how public servants behave in reality, and use this as a means of analysing their PSE.

Evidence suggests (Rainey & Bozeman 2000, Merali 2003, Buelens and Broek 2007, Park *et al* 2008) that there *are* important differences between the values of workers in the private and public sectors; these feed into and are in turn shaped by the overall ethos of the sectors within which they work. These values mainly relate to altruism, the profit motive, and to the idea of a wider public interest. Few studies get any real purchase on the detail of how these values emerged or coalesced: for example many of these studies (McDonough 2006, Lewis & Frank 2002) took place in North America, with a different governance structure and degree of public sector involvement – there are question marks over transferability to the UK. Not least, the public sector in North America is a smaller part of the economy, and the federal structure introduces a degree of local variation not seen in the UK. Public services viewed as 'natural monopolies of state' in the USA (e.g. postal service) are a public/private mix in the UK; unionisation rates are different; welfare systems do not equate. Nor is there compelling evidence that the personal values of public managers translate into an observable PSE.

There are, however, some noticeable differences between the values and ethos of those in the private sector, and those in the public sector. These relate to concepts of motivation (the lack of focus on a profit motive), a focus on externalities and wider social implications, the involvement of politics and therefore relative power, the need for a particular form of accountability and transparency.

In relation to the voluntary sector, evidence implies (Moore 2000, Plant 2003, Cooney 2006) that altruism and the absence of a profit motive - while important factors - are not those which distinguish PSE as being demonstrably different. These factors must combine with the accountabilities, responsibilities, and political neutrality inherent in public service provision, for an identifiable PSE to emerge.

The section has highlighted key differences between PSE and the ethos prevailing in the private and voluntary sectors. These contrasts illuminate not only fresh elements in the definition, but also give an insight into the relative importance and influence of these factors. The next section combines ideas concerning what the PSE is, to build the thesis definition of the PSE, based around sixteen dimensions.



### Section 3 - Defining Public Service Ethos

So far what has been highlighted are the factors that need to be considered in developing a workable definition of PSE for this thesis. There is no one agreed unifying definition – the PSE is a contestable and political concept. The thesis, however, draws on previous research and commentary to provide a usable definition, to inform not only the research but also future discussions of the PSE. This section narrows down the options to provide a working definition of the PSE.

The issues outlined in previous sections show the difficulty in pinning down a definitive description of the PSE. It is not enough to provide a list of desirable traits – this underplays process and context. Also, the exact definition of those traits (and their degree of desirability) may be contestable. Many carry normative connotations: for example, one person's definition of 'fairness' may differ substantially from another's, and the process would be as important as the outcome.

Identifying a PSE *solely* by what it is not is illusory. It implies that it can only be observed in its absence, or honoured in the breach. An ethos cannot be effective if it is only identifiable when it is gone – it could not form the bedrock of public service delivery. For example, inverting NPM principles does not define PSE – it merely gainsays the principles of NPM.

Because of these difficulties and absence of an agreed definition, this study is using a composite definition. The definition is a synthesis of previous research, formatted to allow it to be operationalised for research purposes. It also considers the context within which PSE operates, because this helps to set the parameters of the PSE: context limits public servant behaviour, defines the political landscape and its history, as well as demonstrating the society within which it occurs.

Drawing on the literature discussed so far, the definition of the PSE for this thesis distils the key ideas from the literature into sixteen dimensions, through which the research was conducted, and the data explored in Chapters Six to Nine inclusive.

A definition of the PSE, for the purpose of the thesis, can be refined from the following:

***Accountable*** –an understanding of public interest, as well as direct accountability for actions taken on behalf of the public. Public servants are accountable to the public for underlying principles of action, as well as the actions themselves  
(e.g. Pratchett and Wingfield 1996, Dehardt & Denhardt 2000, O'Toole 2006, Hill & Hupe 2007)

***A product of both self-selection and socialization*** –a combination of pre-existing moral or ethical approaches, and inculcation through working environment: it will demonstrate both processes  
(e.g. Merali 2003, Becker & Conner 2005, McDonough 2006, Park et al 2008)

***Related to organisational and/or geographical culture*** – the regional or historical context will alter the way in which the PSE is played out in the public arena  
(e.g. Chapman 1993 (in Pratchett 1999), Pratchett 1999, Becker and Connor 2005, Wright 2007)

***Trust*** –principles of vertical and horizontal trust between individuals and groups. The extent of reliance on contract or other 'proof' of performance, and the degree of autonomy granted, demonstrate how much this dimension is visible and operational  
(e.g. Maesschalk 2003, Plant 2003, Lawton 2004, O'Toole 2006)

***Impacted by governance processes*** –the way in which governance is enacted, which affects the development of the PSE; in these case studies by NPM and network governance  
(e.g. Farnham & Horton 1996, Merali 2003, Maesschalk 2003, O'Toole 2006, Thompson 2006, Diefenbach 2009)

***Affected by working level*** –a principle across levels of organisational seniority, though how this manifests itself may vary across organisational levels  
(e.g. Lipsky 1980, Nielsen 2006, Buelens and Broek 2007, Hupe & Hill 2007)

***Loyalty*** –loyalty to the wider public interest; not merely to organisation, client or profession.

(e.g. Pratchett and Wingfield 1996, Audit Commission 2002, Boyne 2002, Grimshaw *et al* 2003, Park *et al* 2008)

***Related to personal motivation*** –a commitment to serving the wider community: a degree of altruism which differs from personal and professional pride, and originates in the individual's motivation

(e.g. Lewis and Frank 2002, McDonough 2006, Wright 2007, Park *et al* 2008)

***Related to organisational focus*** – a commitment to outcomes, but co-existing with organisational focus which may be on changing processes, outcomes, or personal traits  
(e.g. Brereton & Temple 1999, Hoggett 2006)

***Related to personal values*** – a link to personal values, rather than prevailing organisational or professional code.

(e.g. Lewis and Frank 2002, Lawton 2004, McDonough 2006)

***Concerned with the public interest*** –a commitment to uncovering and supporting the public interest: it is visible in how this interest is decided and the balance between individual and group/societal needs

(e.g. Elcock 2006, Farnham and Horton 1996, Thompson 2006, Buelens and Broek 2007)

***Affected by contractual factors*** – a reliance on trust; the impact of contractual relationships and obligations will be significant.

(e.g. Bogdanor 1994, Brereton and Temple 1999, Grimshaw *et al* 2003)

***Varying from organisation to organisation*** – consistency across organisations/partnerships, but how this manifests itself may alter according to context

(e.g. Grimshaw *et al* 2003, Merali 2003, Buelens & Broek 2007)

***Different to a voluntary sector ethos*** – clear differences from the voluntary sector ethos.

(e.g. Audit Commission 2002, Lewis & Frank 2002, Plant 2003, Cooney 2004)

***Different to an ethos of public sector continuity*** –a different approach to theoretical notions of a ‘public sector ethos’ and mere loyalty to public sector processes and continuity

(e.g. Laffin 1998, Public Administration Committee 2002, Christensen & Wright 2009)

***Concerned with wide and long term thinking*** –consistent long-term thinking aimed at the wider public interest, looking beyond the short term, outside of job description or organisation, and towards community and societal requirements

(e.g. Denhardt & Denhardt 2000, Hoggett 2006, Haqle 2007, DuGay 2008, Diefenbach 2009, Elcock 2013)

These sixteen dimensions were operationalised into interview questions, before being collapsed into five overarching ‘areas for discussion’ for analysis purposes. These are:

- Public interest
- Impact of governance
- Impact of organisation
- Impact of individual
- Ethos comparison

## **Conclusion**

The chapter has explored aspects of PSE, taking commentators' views on basic parameters, and assessing the arguments of the highly contestable elements. It has also compared PSE to other sectors, highlighting further elements that need inclusion in a definition. Finally, it has produced a working definition of PSE, as the basis of subsequent research. The chapter has demonstrated that PSE is a complex concept: it is shaped politically and, of course, contextually.

The next chapter looks at the contextual elements within which the PSE is located. The PSE is part of, reflects, shapes and is in turn shaped by, wider changes in public policy and its delivery. Some of these wider changes will be used in this thesis – in particular, the changing nature of governance. The next chapter looks at developments in the concept and understanding of the process referred to as 'governance'; it tracks through to the present day, and how this has connections to the very nature of the PSE.

## **CHAPTER TWO: GOVERNANCE AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF NETWORK GOVERNANCE**

### **Introduction**

The previous chapter developed a working definition of PSE. It explored some contextual aspects: PSE's development as a concept, comparisons with other sectors, and traits associated with PSE. Chapter One looked at PSE in relative isolation: yet, characteristics of PSE are interwoven with other facets of public policy.

PSE is affected by governance – the philosophy, communication, accountability, and other aspects of turning rhetoric and policy into reality. This impact is because PSE operates within a context partly defined and shaped by governance; both concepts are part of service delivery, as well as underpinning policy development.

The concept of governance has undergone significant and distinct (though overlapping) changes over the past forty years. This chapter explains previous incarnations of governance, alongside their relationship with PSE. It then focuses upon network governance, as the theory of governance within this research. Network governance has been cited (by, amongst others, Rhodes 1996 and Stoker 2004) as the pre-eminent governance system of current and future eras. Examining PSE within such a system brings contemporary and relevant analysis to the current condition of PSE.

The first section of the chapter looks at Weberian principles of 'neutral bureaucrats' delivering public services. It does so to connect governance to the actions and thinking of public servants; the earliest point of connection between governance and PSE. This section then places the initial concept in an era of pre-Thatcherite Britain: governance as part of wider consensus around Keynesian economic principles and significant state roles (Bevir and Rhodes 2003). Again, the implications for connecting PSE and governance are considered.

In the second section, governance within the profound political and social upheaval of the 1980s is considered, alongside market-based thinking in public services. This set of developments was characterised as 'New Public Management' (NPM) – an approach

carrying significant impact for PSE. There is discussion of the parallel development of governance and PSE up to the late 1990s, which lays the groundwork for the following sections, that look at the modern concept of network governance, and how this affects PSE.

The third section explains the basic parameters of network governance developed in the 1990s and early 2000s – what it is, and how it might be recognised. This is a relatively brief definition – most detail about network governance is in the fourth section, where detailed critique allows more meticulous explanation.

The fourth section provides three areas of critique of network governance – theoretical considerations, application of the concept, and evidence for the existence of network governance ideas.

The fifth section updates critiques to reflect recent developments – some key supporters of network governance theory have experienced some form of change of heart. This section looks at those changes.

The sixth section takes academic arguments and studies of the previous sections, and distils them into a working definition of network governance, to form the basis of study for this thesis.

## **Section 1 - Weber and the impartial bureaucrat**

The section looks at Weberian thinking as an attempt to explain the bureaucrat's role and significance. It also examines interplay between governance and PSE.

Weber's ideas have been conflated by many (for example, Beauman 1989, in DuGay 2008) with the 'dead hand' of bureaucracy; a stifling system blocking innovation and rapid change, benefitting public servants who seek to perpetuate power, influence and employment (DiMaggio and Powell 1983). For some it is shorthand for inhibited public service.

Du Gay (2008) argues that Weber's ideas attempt to identify suitable ethical behaviours for bureaucrats. He suggests Weber proposed divorcing effective public administration from individual moral belief: subsuming personal moral conviction, to act dispassionately and impartially. The bureaucrat's moral compass is wider than individual, organization, or even job description (Shachar 2000, in DuGay 2008). Such an idea runs counter to modern ideals of bureaucrats as enthusiastic enablers who 'own' problems and drive solutions.

Du Gay argues that Weber laid the foundations for modern ideas on PSE (Uhr 1994, in DuGay 2008). NPM's introduction of more entrepreneurial and passionate approaches opposes Du Gay's (and Weber's) ideas of PSE driving official behaviour (Supiot 2006, in DuGay 2008). For example, NPM asks bureaucrats to show enthusiasm for new ideas and policies. Du Gay suggests enthusiasm could bring undesirable zeal and commitment: a public servant should display energy, not passion (Thompson 1975, in DuGay 2008). Energy provides vigorous pursuit of policy, but passion suggests subjectivity. Following NPM would remove wider moral values from judgement, in the rush to display the required zeal (Armbruster 2005, in DuGay 2008). Du Gay cites the build-up to the Iraq War as an example of zeal-induced groupthink, and enthusiasm trumping an effective PSE (also Elcock 2011). He concludes that such zeal discourages 'an ethic of responsibility' (DuGay 2008).

Commentators note that complex societies need methods and structures for negotiating between competing aims and beliefs (e.g. Honig 1996, in Hoggett 2006), Hoggett



2006). In the public sector, bureaucracy occupies this role. This is the basis of Lipsky's (1980) concept of the 'street level bureaucrat' – mediating between disparate aims, conflicts and the dilemmas they bring. The idea, however, goes back to Weber and his initial theories about bureaucracy and state.

Hoggett (2006) takes up the theme of the necessity of bureaucracy, focusing on public organisations as the location where public purpose and complexity are contested. He also suggests bureaucracy is the arena where public anxiety is played out (Obholzer and Roberts 1994, in Hoggett 2006). Public organisations therefore must have social, ethical and moral dimensions; this influences their prevailing ethos (Steele 1999, in Hoggett 2006). PSE would be an outcome from the interaction between society and the bureaucracy it requires.

Honig (1996, in Hoggett 2006) takes Hoggett's idea of 'necessary bureaucracy', arguing that a public servant occupies a "dilemmatic space" - a context containing an inherent dilemma between wants, needs and resources (Obholzer 2003, in Hoggett 2006). The public servants' mediating role usually leads to some form of conflict or disagreement. The public servant takes failure personally (Mendus 2000, in Hoggett 2006) - some conflicts cannot be resolved, and rarely to everyone's satisfaction - and feels trapped in a no-win situation (Feldman 1989, in Mathur and Skelcher 2007). The public servant manages ambivalence: e.g. citizens want 'something done', but not to deal with the consequences of action (Siedentop 2000, in Lawton 2004). To navigate through these dilemmas and issues the public servant relies on an ethos; a basic underpinning of decisions and activities. PSE is not just Weberian notions of impartiality and duty of care; it is also process issues such as courtesy and diligence. This fits with Lipsky's (1980) view that the bureaucrat seeks to balance contradictions: bureaucrats deliver the visible process of public policy, as well as carrying out that policy and interpreting it in real-world conditions.

Two criticisms stem directly from this. First, the original Weberian view understates very real differences in attitudes, structures and approaches from one sector to another. Second, Weber's theory underplays the roles and powers of professional groups, and possibly of national culture.

Further critique can be directed at Du Gay (2008) and Hoggett (2006). Du Gay (2008) applies the Weberian ideal to the modern day, identifying that PSE might struggle against NPM strictures for enthusiasm and ownership of policies. While Du Gay distinguishes enthusiasm from energy, he fails to identify why 'zeal' would automatically wash over any prevailing ethos - impartiality need not mean a lack of commitment. Du Gay treats enthusiasm and energy as mutually exclusive, but they need not be.

Hoggett (2006) identifies PSE's position at the junction of society and bureaucracy, and stresses the ethical and moral dimensions to public decisions and implementation. He also notes the importance of process and impartiality. This means that Hoggett has identified the theoretical basis for PSE, but not what drives it. It appears simply as a balance of current societal and organisational interests, in permanent competition. If so, the ethos would change - as society and organisations changes, and as the balance between various societal and organisational interests shift. This is not an ethos, but merely expresses current organisational structure and culture. This implies PSE is flimsier and less concrete than other commentators suggest: a fluid, temporary and minor cultural phenomenon with little impact or influence.

### ***Governance and PSE up to 1979 – Weberian consensus***

It should be noted that this concept of governance and PSE took root in a more patrician society (Public Administration Committee 2002). An educated elite controlled public decisions (LeGrand 2003, in Hoggett *et al* 2006). The notion of patrician decision-making feeds into the historical narrative surrounding governance.

Until the mid- to late-1970s much government activity operated hierarchically: decisions and accountability flowing downwards, from ministers to the workforce delivering front-line services (Bevir and Rhodes 2003). For commentators such as Bevir and Rhodes (2003) the development of NPM is a consequence of perceived 'failure' in this system characterised as lacking adaptability, or responsiveness to both customer need and technological change. While networks of individuals and organisations existed, top-down control dominated (Pierre and Peters 2000). The PSE up to 1979 could be generally defined as 'paternalistic', reflecting this top-down flow

(LeGrand 2003, in Hoggett *et al* 2006). While Lipsky (1980) argues this trend was ameliorated by street-level bureaucrats, the dominant forces in governance were hierarchical. The concept (and application) of PSE had developed from altruistic notions of public service and public duty, and Victorian paternalism. The political consensus for this remained until the mid- to late-1970s (Stoker 2004), when the Conservative opposition mounted a concerted critique of the status quo (Rhodes 1996). The critique portrayed a failing state: hierarchy did not deliver customer service, flexibility or value-for-money (the latter differing from a profit motive *per se*). Instead, Conservatives argued, bureaucracies were locked into a complacent status quo dominated by internal priorities, fractured industrial relations, a lack of innovation, poor service, and high costs (Stoker 1998, Newman 2001).

The critique argued that users were passive recipients of service, with little consultation or power; the colloquial term was that ‘the men from the ministry knew best’ (LeGrand 2003, in Hoggett *et al* 2006). Public servants were assumed to have integrity and to operate fairly and impartially until they evidenced otherwise; discipline codes existed on the basis that unethical behaviour was unusual (Lawton 2004).

The size and coherence of a single planned service meant a ‘one-size-fits-all’ mentality deemed entirely within the spirit of PSE. Such an approach was seen as demonstrating impartiality, political neutrality and absence of prejudice or special treatment (Public Administration Committee 2002). ‘Professionalism’ was firmly embedded within certain occupations (e.g. civil service, doctors, teachers), but not in large swathes of public service: many public service workers ‘inherited’ their ethos from managers and leaders (Pratchett and Wingfield 1996) – a top-down flow accentuating the paternalistic theme.

PSE in this era contained several assumptions that went largely unchallenged. Public servants would be competent, politically neutral, act in the best interests of society and not themselves, know and understand what was needed, would be honest and act with integrity (O’Toole 1996). These assumptions rarely needed explicitly stating, proof or enforcement (Lawton 2004): they were part of the role, and implicitly in existence.

Overall, the pre-1979 period relied on PSE based around neutrality and bureaucratic disinterest, and shared values of competence and integrity that were assumed, not

explicit. Governance and PSE were connected via shared value systems, communication and management; and common underpinning beliefs. This connection was threatened and changed in 1979 by a fundamental reworking of this consensus. This change is examined in the next section.

## **Section 2 – the challenge of New Public Management**

The previous section explained how consensus around values and service delivery had endured for many years. Into the picture in the mid-1970s came ideas propagated by politicians such as Keith Joseph, spawning the radical alternative of NPM, with significant implications for PSE.

New Public Management (NPM) is a shorthand term to describe a variety of changes in public policy and public sector management since the 1970s. Most commentators agree on the main constituent parts. NPM introduces private-sector thinking, attitudes, processes and aims, into public sector management (Hood 1991, in Laffin 1998). This seeks to de-politicise areas of public policy; creating a direct link between service provider and consumer, and inviting the development of arms'-length agencies. Management focus changes from traditional bureaucracy to more innovative and entrepreneurial approaches - the public become groups of customers - with greater attention to performance measures and efficiency (Ferlie 1996, in Laffin 1998). NPM also uses business processes such as agency status, strategic planning, performance targets and business cases (Pollitt 1990, in Laffin 1998). For some (Brereton and Temple 1999), it is a welcome and necessary introduction of business thinking and language into previously moribund sectors. For others, it is perhaps lip-service to an approach that needs significant adjustment to fit public sector conditions (Farnham and Horton 1996). At worst, it is a mistake that damages the public sector, and has not achieved the objectives set out for it (Newman 2001).

The analysis of NPM and its' implementation is particularly useful in studying PSE. NPM is not merely a series of introduced process changes (Farnham and Horton 1996); it is in many respects an ethos of its own, and so competes with PSE among public officials (Denhardt and Denhardt 2000). NPM aims to change the prevailing ethos (Pratchett and Wingfield 1996); to alter attitudes and therefore behaviour (Buelens and Broeck 2007) – so analysing the impact of NPM contributes to our understanding of PSE in the past, and future.

Merali (2003) looked at the impact of NPM on PSE among senior managers in the National Health Service. He found a consensual ethos around shared altruistic values,

felt to apply to the NHS as a whole. Respondents felt this ethos had survived NPM reforms, because reforms went ‘with the grain’ of the prevailing ethos - strengthening not undermining. Since some NPM principles directly contradict PSE, this suggests NPM’s introduction was somewhat diluted from the original concept.

Lawton (2004) explored the impact of NPM on disciplinary culture. Changes in regulation had shifted the ethos: the previous culture focused on individual integrity, but NPM demanded accountability based on compliance with known targets and standards. The ethos moved from appropriate internal values and character, to following of explicit rules and codes of conduct (Grimshaw *et al* 2003): the point is not compatibility, but emphasis and balance. Lawton and Grimshaw *et al* believe the default position became adherence to codes of conduct, not the assumption of appropriate attitudes. Lawton found no evidence that unethical behaviour had increased or decreased during this change. Lawton believed public administration - essentially a moral activity by virtue of the decisions it must take - should retain elements of individual character shaping that decision-making process. Gallie (1998, in Grimshaw *et al* 2003) believed that reconciling values at individual, organisational and societal levels took place in the margins (‘grey areas’) of policy-making: all the more reason why public managers should be grounded in a set of principles to guide them. This emphasises the importance of understanding what PSE is, and what hinders and drives it.

Lawton (2004) also noted that PSE was under threat from NPM, due to three factors - professional vocation was less common in an era without ‘jobs for life’; public officials routinely engaged with other ethos’ through partnerships and private sector exposure; there were now several ethos’, because the battle between PSE and other ethos’ had become more explicit. The latter point is especially important. NPM changes structures and accountabilities - it may not directly replace PSE, but fragment and undermine PSE (Chapman 1994, in Grimshaw *et al* 2003). Lawton (2004) cited Stoke and Clegg (2002), who suggested that PSE was fragmented throughout the organisational pyramid – eroded at senior levels, confused at lower levels. The corollary of public services with seemingly no strong ethical basis was undermined public trust. This was especially true in partnerships, where trust that formed the basis of bureaucratic relationships was

shifted by NPM into legalistic contractual terms (Garsten and Grey 2001, in Lawton 2004).

Boyne (2002) points out that, while there are significant and identifiable differences between PSE and private sector values, these do not invalidate the use (or impact) of NPM. Instead, the problem may be insufficient knowledge and evidence about what actually works in the private sector, to understand what might be transferable. NPM assumes it has the right approach, and that this can be imported into the public sector: seeking to change an ethos, without evidence that the ethos it is introducing is any better.

Plant (1997) takes a different perspective, believing NPM was introduced purely as a more prosaic, pragmatic attempt to constrain what was seen as self-serving power. This takes the analysis back to Weberian critiques – the bureaucrat operating to personal benefit to retain power, privileges and employment. In Plant's (1997) view, NPM aimed to alter behaviour - not attitudes - through quasi-markets, contracting out, and partnerships. Plant foresees issues not from abandoning PSE, but in the practical outcomes of NPM measures – the dangers of 'work to rule' by contractors, reduced trust between partners, and short-term thinking replacing longer-term and broader strategic objectives.

Farnham and Horton (1996) also take the view that NPM represents practical steps, not a more philosophical attempt to change thinking (Denhardt and Denhardt 2000). They cite NPM changes such as reward systems, business-like language, performance targets, financial controls and efficiency plans. They argue that the problem is the lack of an ethos underpinning such changes – the outcome is that lip-service is paid, but the commitment is shallow. PSE is undermined, however; public service is in a confused limbo between PSE and genuinely new NPM principles.

Haqle (2007) focuses on NPM's impact in eroding public service neutrality. He argues that NPM fragments culture and institutional capacity (Clarke 2004), undermining PSE's consensus around shared values. NPM implicitly undermines PSE because at the heart of NPM is a basic mistrust of public servants. Plant (1997) and O'Toole (2006) echo this point, by stressing that PSE has been deliberately undermined by NPM, since

NPM's bedrock is that the public sector is sclerotic, self-perpetuating, and unable to deliver efficient services.

Thompson (2006) echoes Haque's idea of fragmentation: NPM undermines the consistency implicit in a shared ethos, by eroding institutional cohesion. NPM limits both discretion and individual judgement: this reduces the range of possible actions into a group of pre-set objectives. These objectives may not enhance the public interest. Thus the limited range of solutions implies consistency, but this consistency jars with the fundamental aims of the service (among others, to act in the public interest): NPM constrains without addressing the basic need.

Yet some commentators support NPM, seeing it as strengthening PSE not eroding it. Maesschalk (2003) believes NPM encourages ethical behaviour, through greater openness stimulated by competition. Maesschalk argues that NPM encourages greater accountability, allowing public servants more discretion through more entrepreneurial and responsive public services. Maesschalk (2003) contends that NPM achieves greater integrity, by rewarding appropriate behaviour.

Brereton and Temple (1999) argue that NPM strengthens PSE. Like Lawton (2004), they see little evidence of declining standards of probity due to NPM changes. They argue that blurring public/private boundaries has also blurred ethical boundaries between these groups, though Bogdanor (1994, in Brereton and Temple 1999) argues there is an implicit ethical difference. Butcher (1993, in Brereton and Temple 1999) claims this replicates wider societal changes, such as public comfort with business language. Brereton and Temple argue that NPM strengthens democracy by increasing responsiveness; Lawton (2004) argues responsiveness is different to – sometimes opposite to – accountability. Brereton and Temple contend that PSE alone would not have created changes such as customer consultation; therefore NPM has improved PSE by adding new dimensions. The study of social attitudes by Park *et al* (2008) supports this view.

Plowden (1994) argues that the impact of NPM is less severe than some commentators claim; public services remain a battleground of politics and ethical dilemmas (Clarke and Newman 1997). Plowden asserts that democratic politics remain essential to public



services - however much NPM tries to remove it - because balancing scarce resources always demands democratic accountability for decisions made. While NPM reduces the accountability of public servants (Elcock 2011) in an undesirable way, citizens are not the same as customers (Dibben *et al* 2004, in Haque 2007): the public still care about not only outcome, but the process by which that outcome was achieved. Thus, argues Plowden, politicians still need to remember that they are held responsible for public decisions, and public managers are still part of a wider collective whole.

It is possible to synthesise the range of views considered here, encompassing broader ideas about how PSE has been affected by NPM. NPM was a critique of previous values (Clarke and Newman 1997), as well as previous systems of governance. Those same critiques can be applied to PSE in the pre-1979 era, emphasising the close connection between governance type and PSE. The critique can be broken down into three main issues.

First, the critique challenged the prevailing view that certain things could only be provided by the state. Prior to 1979 a large range of services, industries and sectors were deemed 'natural territory' for the state. Once this notion was challenged, the areas where the state was seen as the effective (or necessary) provider were changed (Laffin 1998). The privatisations of the 1980s, beginning with utilities such as telephony, altered the political landscape and queried the state's monopoly on other public services (Hoggett 2006). Even where the public sector retained overall control, part of the service was often contracted out, or subject to competitive tendering (Public Administration Committee 2002). In part there was a political aim, to dilute trade union membership and control. But it was also a philosophical and theoretical challenge to previous assumptions that public service providers must be part of the public sector. For this research, this point illuminates the key role of public/private/voluntary interaction.

The implication for PSE was a dilution of the previous uniformity and commonality of public services. Public sector workers began to mingle, and co-operate, with private sector workers. This co-operation brought different ethos' into contact with each other. The reduced public sector role in services was also a direct criticism of how those services had been provided (Stoker 1998). This undermined confidence in the ethos that had been part of that provision – the thesis research looks at this legacy.

Second, the critique of the pre-1979 era directly attacked the means, processes, accountability, flexibility, and efficiency with which services had been provided (Newman 2001). It was explicitly stated by the incoming 1979 government that the way public services had been operated was moribund, inflexible, inefficient, directed at bureaucratic convenience not service quality (Farnham and Horton 1996). The role of contracting out was increased, accompanied by NPM changes (Stoker 1998). These were all overtly aimed at changing the way things were done (Pierre and Peters 2000).

The previously-accepted paternalism was now seen as poor accountability and inflexibility; an unwillingness to see that the ‘user’ was in fact a ‘customer’. NPM strictures introduced post-1979 placed less emphasis on societal impact from public servants’ behaviour. Instead, the focus was on the customer; shorter-term outputs, directly-measurable performance by the individual, and satisfaction levels of customers. This reflected the political and philosophical view of the 1979 government – that society was essentially the aggregation of individuals, rather than a separate entity in and of itself (Elcock 2013). The latter had been a building block of the previous era’s PSE; the former was therefore a direct challenge to it. The extent of this NPM domination is a key feature of the research’s interview questions.

Thirdly, the critique changed how public servants were managed. Units and parts of organisations became more discrete; they began to operate as individual business units, responsible for their own performance but decoupled from other parts of the organisation or the public sector (Stoker 2004). Individual performance and behaviour came under closer scrutiny (Rainey and Bozeman 2000, Plowden 1994). In some ways individual autonomy increased, as generic processes were seen as customer-unfriendly; the public servant was encouraged to think about customer satisfaction. In other ways autonomy was reduced, as efficiency was pursued by stripping down processes to their core (Thompson 2006), and by focusing on measurable outputs not societal outcomes (Rhodes 1996). Again, the research will illuminate how this has played out in a modern partnership context.

For PSE, this meant that overarching aims and intents became superfluous – what mattered was individual performance, meeting measurable and demonstrable performance levels, outputs not outcomes (O’Toole 2006). Individual conduct became less about assumed integrity, and more an ability to demonstrate a process followed or

target reached (Lawton 2004). The satisfaction of the individual customer or customer group mattered more than wider social goals. As horizons and timescales reduced, and micro-management increased, PSE came under pressure to reinvent itself – to become an aggregate of individual customer demand, and the individual performance to meet that demand (Elcock 2013); to demonstrate efficiency at the business unit level, rather than a more general contribution to wider societal good (Farnham and Horton 1996, Brereton and Temple 1999). Coupled with rubbing up against another ethos from the private sector, PSE became diluted and dissipated; less discussed, and subsumed within notions of efficiency and value for public money.

Some pre-1979 approaches remained, however. NPM was often hazily implemented or haphazard in impact (Newman 2001); different sectors responded differently, were subject to different pressures, and began the era from different starting points (Farnham and Horton 1996). But overall, the impact of NPM-style changes after 1979 altered PSE, changing it to a more business-oriented, shorter-term, more individualistic ethos. These changes altered efficiency and value-for-money, and it is arguable whether this contributed to advancing the wider public good. PSE became more fragmented - less rooted in a notion of a wider society and longer-term aims; the recipient of services was an individual entity and less part of a wider whole. By extension, the service provider was an individual involved in providing services to other individuals; less part of a wider system with deeper and more intangible elements to it.

Insofar as NPM sought to replace PSE, it may have fragmented it and undermined its influence. Evidence suggests that NPM has altered some values, especially in partnership working, where public- and private-sector staff can work side-by-side. Commentators have noted (Brereton and Temple 1999, Maesschalk 2003) PSE and NPM operating alongside each other – sometimes co-operating, sometimes competing – with officials left in confusion, and no ethos dominating.

If NPM has only sought to alter behaviour by a series of practical changes, the impact this has made on PSE becomes an unintended by-product. Since NPM - in this view - is not a coherent set of changes aimed at profound culture shift, the fact that it has unbalanced the previous PSE is an unforeseen consequence. It is arguable that NPM has undermined something that was previously a motivation for public officials. But since

NPM would not be viewed as a replacement ethos, it leaves a motivational vacuum as a result.

The balance of evidence suggests that NPM was conceived as an alternative ethos (Newman 2001). Too much political rhetoric, and too much evidence concerning implementation, suggests it was an intentional attempt to change the status quo. Implicit in both language and measures themselves is the notion that a public sector that does not incorporate a business mind-set is not efficient enough for a modern state. Whatever the rights and wrongs of this presumption, it is inherent in the NPM changes that followed. On this basis, the evidence suggests that NPM has fragmented the previous PSE - but not supplanted it - in the minds of public servants.

The section explored how the introduction of NPM altered the playing field, and so altered both context and direction of PSE. The evidence here is that NPM was introduced as an alternative ethos; while its implementation has not been total, it has wrought major changes on public service generally, and these have played into the nature of PSE and how it has changed. The principles of NPM are, in many ways, the antithesis of previously-held ideas about PSE and how it should be displayed.

To examine these issues more closely, the thesis explores the concept of network governance, which can be examined in contemporary case studies, to see how the connection between governance and PSE works in a modern setting. The next sections look more closely at network governance: how the concept emerged, what its parameters are, and how understanding governance lays the groundwork for the thesis research.

### **Section 3 – The need for a new explanation**

Loffler (2004) defines governance as the way power is exercised via the interaction of various stakeholders, producing a composite outcome rather than an individual result. A crucial facet of governance is the change in management style required of government (Bevir and Rhodes 2003) to become a policy moderator and partner, rather than a top-down imposer of change.

Rhodes (1996) identified two key problems which highlight difficulties with the use of NPM that emerged in the 1990s. They also indicated that more attention was needed to the process by which decisions were taken, disseminated and implemented:

- inherent contradictions within NPM – neglecting inter-organizational issues; undermining skills such as negotiation; inappropriate or misleading results as targets
- the ‘hollowing out’ of the state – the state gradually losing direct control, as the work of the state becomes fragmented; a reduced ability to steer, often because the state no longer understands what it is controlling; blurred lines of accountability; and a confusion between political accountability and customer responsiveness

The perceived limitations of NPM were not the only reason for the rise in interest in governance. Continual pressure on public finances led to on-going discussions about the appropriate size and role of the state – politicians began to look for solutions that used resources differently, rather than using more of them (Bevir and Rhodes 2003, Stoker 2004) .

Western nations in particular were grappling with what were termed ‘wicked issues’: social problems whose cause (and response) went way beyond the capacity of any one strand of government (Rhodes 1996, Goss 2001). Drug abuse, for example, transcended the silo boundaries of conventional government; health, education, housing, crime and disorder, taxation and welfare could be involved. Critics of NPM

argued that neither quasi-markets nor hierarchies could adequately harness all the resources, information and skills required to tackle such issues.

Rhodes (2000) believes that policies developed under NPM had a number of unintended consequences. Creating competition structures, for example, actually led to greater co-operation between suppliers, as user need could not be met by disparate and independent work. Rhodes also believes that the increasingly contract-based nature of public service delivery under NPM led to an undermining of trust, and a lack of long-term relationships. In a wider context, Rhodes cites pressures in the UK for greater devolution of powers as a further strain on a more centrally-directed governance style.

All these pressures have combined, say supporters of network governance, to create the conditions for a move to more network-based working. Some believed it had already arrived:

“Governance has become the defining narrative of British government at the turn of the century, challenging the commonplace notion of Britain as a unitary state with a strong executive.” (Rhodes 2000, p349)

Until recently Rhodes (2000) felt that network governance is the dominant form of governance in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Rhodes(2000) and Stoker (2004) argued that governance by network helps an understanding of how networks deliver services (and the problems this can cause), the limitations of NPM, and the need for new forms of management style by government, to manage and steer networks effectively. Rhodes (2000) believes that governance by network has a number of key characteristics:

- interdependence between organizations, with opaque boundaries
- continual interaction between members, with on-going negotiation and sharing of resources
- game-like interaction, with high degrees of trust, and known rules
- high degree of autonomy from the state; the networks are self-organising and resist government steering

Inherent in these characteristics are a set of conditions that maximise network effectiveness. These include high levels of professional expertise, reliable information, local and flexible services, products or outputs that are difficult to measure or quantify, and a need for negotiation to price, analyse or implement policies.

Rhodes (2000) also accepts that there are non-financial costs to network governance. The involvement of networks in the creation and implementation of policy is an implicit undermining of democratic processes. Networks can be unrepresentative (particularly excluding those without power) and can be closed systems, unaccountable for their actions and serving narrow interests rather than the public good (see also Elcock 2011). They can be difficult to steer and inefficient, even paralysed by debate. They can exhibit all the negative aspects of an oligopoly or cartel (Rhodes and Marsh 1992, p666, in Rhodes 1996):

“... [Networks] destroy political responsibility by shutting out the public; create privileged oligarchies; and are conservative in their impact because, for example, the rules of the game and access favour established interests.”

The section outlined some of the basic tenets of network governance, and explored how network governance began to take shape in the 1990s, as an attempt to address some of the perceived shortcomings of NPM. Critiques of network governance have continued: indeed, even some previous proponents of network governance have shifted position (as explored in section 5). The next section focuses on some criticisms of network governance.

## **Section 4 – A critique of network governance**

The previous sections laid the groundwork for understanding how network governance came to be seen as an explanation of governance in the modern world. These sections also offered a fundamental definition of the basic tenets of network governance. In this section, these tenets are examined in more detail: the section looks at several broad criticisms of network governance as a theory.

Network governance is not without its critics. Theorising has not been fully developed, and depends for much of its supporting evidence on relatively recent public sector developments; the concept is open to critique on a number of fronts. This section explores those criticisms within the following broad categories:

- concerns about the epistemology of the concept, and the degree to which it is explanatory and not merely discursive
- concerns about how the concept can be practically applied
- concerns about the UK experience and the degree to which current public policy developments actually demonstrate network governance in action

### ***a) Theoretical considerations***

At the heart of the theoretical debate about network governance are some fundamental epistemological questions about the concept itself. Dowding (2001), one of the main critics of network governance theory, identified a number of potential shortcomings by addressing policy network theory:

- policy networks are a metaphor; a way of explaining through the use of a model. Dowding feels this limits the use of policy networks to a theoretical exercise that cannot be applied to prevailing conditions. Dowding argues that there is little solid evidence of the existence of policy networks, but the theory serves a purpose by framing the debate, albeit in simplistic terms
- policy network theory, especially as espoused by Rhodes, is more focused on the characteristics of the actors within networks, than the characteristics of the



networks themselves. This over-emphasis on the individuals within networks is a weakness of the theory, since it places undue stress on subjective assessment of individuals and their motives. This undermines the theory's explanatory reach and power; it does not provide objective data as the basis for discussion but instead relies on a subjective interpretation by both individuals and researchers. Raab (2001) supported this view, suggesting the theory did not explain, for example, how or why agents' roles changed over time

- policy network theory does not explain variations; it cannot adequately explain how the same actor will behave differently in two different networks. The theory should be independent of the characteristics of the individual actors, and thus be able to predict network behaviour and outcomes; it cannot do this adequately
- policy network depends on meso-analysis (the level between micro-level theories of individual behaviour, and the macro-level understanding of governance). Dowding (2001) argues that this level is artificial; it is merely a mixture of the micro- and the macro. The thesis research is centred on a meso-level partnership, and so explores this facet

In responding to these criticisms, Marsh and Smith (2001) argue that network theory is more than merely a metaphor; it has an explanatory role that encompasses detail on actors and structure, and seeks to identify processes. Marsh and Smith (2001) accept that part of network theory is still in a formative stage, and that it does not always have explicit evidence to back up its assertions. However, Marsh and Smith (2001) argue that this is not in itself a criticism, as Dowding (2001) claims. Rather, it is explained by a difference in epistemological approach: Dowding (2001) is a positivist who seeks 'one true explanation' and wants a formal evidenced model to do so. Marsh and Smith (2001) claim that they, and others, are realists: accepting that some aspects of policy networks cannot be observed and so must be interpreted, providing a theory that cannot be fully tested because of the complexity of the society and circumstances it is interpreting. Since society, policy-making and policy implementation cannot be tested under controlled conditions, the theory must be interpretive, and this is merely a characteristic of it and not a criticism.

Evans (2001) falls somewhere in the middle of these two viewpoints. Evans believes that Marsh and Smith's view has merit; there is such a thing as the meso-level of analysis and it is the most appropriate way to view networks, since it avoids the abstract nature of the macro, and the overly-narrow implications of the micro. In addition, Evans (2001) argues, the policy network theory has credence, and some power and reach. Evans (2001) criticises Marsh and Smith (2001) for being somewhat timid in the development of their theory, and feels that the theory is more analogy than solid explanation, and lacks precision.

A further theoretical critique concerns the relationship between agency and structure; the way in which the characteristics and behaviour of the actors co-exists with the structures and processes of the network itself. The network governance concept asserts that structures shape and constrain actor behaviour, institutionalizing rules and reflecting both past battles and prevailing culture; they are not static but they are political. The degree to which these structures are set, and the extent to which they constrain, dictate the 'tightness' of the network; not just how policies are resolved, but which ones are discussed.

Views on network governance, however, have focused on the role of agents, or actors, within the network. There is a constant two-way flow between agency and structure; each helps to shape the other and the basis for this is constantly shifting. Marsh and Smith (2000) identified three ways in which agents can avoid being totally constrained by structure:

- agents can belong to more than one network and so are not solely defined by one membership
- agents can alter their understanding or approach to the rules set out in the structure
- agents have skills which affect their ability to interact with the constraints created by the network

The criticism of network governance is that the interplay between these two facets (agency and structure) is not adequately explained. Proponents of the concept simply

say that it is a fluctuating, dialectic two-way relationship, but for other commentators this is insufficient; it does not explain or predict how the network will operate, or how it has come to operate in that way (Evans 2001). Thus, say critics, the concept does not explain how the context has influenced the network.

Newman (2001) took a wider view in terms of criticising network governance. This looked at the concept as a construct; arguing that it was a useful discursive and theoretical concept, but less useful for actual analysis of the situation. Newman believes that governance itself, as a term, is normative:

“...governance also symbolises a number of normative values, emphasising the primacy of network-based collaboration and coordination in complex societies. Networks are viewed as desirable in that they are more flexible and responsive than hierarchies, and capable of avoiding the ‘anarchic’ disbenefits of markets. Self-government is viewed as superior to government by the state.” (Newman 2001, p16)

Newman (2001) argued that network governance as a concept only worked if a particular view of history and development was taken. For example, Newman (2001) believes that the underpinning assumptions in network governance mis-state the role, importance, and trajectory of NPM; it simplifies the perceived dominance of hierarchies; and it underplays the role of networks in previous decades. Far from being a new and emerging form of governance, Newman (2001) contends, networks have been there all the time, but in a different context and to a different degree:

“...public policy has long been shaped by a wide range of actors, both inside and outside government, and the ideal of elite networks having a major influence on policy development is certainly not new.” (Newman 2001, p17)

Other commentators have provided a basis for Newman’s theme of wider-based criticism, by looking at network governance within the broader context of the state. Hirst (2000, in Newman 2001) argues that the state does not become ‘hollowed out’, but merely morphs into alternative structures of power. Likewise Jessop (1998, in

Newman 2001) believes that the state does not decentralise – it retains key influences such as resources and regulation – and so remains involved in delivery as well as steering. Both of these commentators are right, argues Newman, to suggest that the network governance narrative overstates the extent to which networks have radically altered how power is exercised, and by whom.

***b) Practical considerations: Policy networks and network governance***

Network governance seeks to explain how governance can operate through actors and a network structure, combining in an iterative way to develop and/or implement policy. However, it has been seen in the previous section that there are question marks about whether the concept is robust or powerful enough as an explanatory tool. In addition, critics have pointed to a lack of observable evidence to support theoretical positions. Additional criticisms, therefore, come from an analysis of reality that compares what is happening ‘on the ground’ with theoretical assumptions.

A powerful example of this is the critique of the notion that the existence of a network automatically implies network governance. The challenging of this idea illustrates the more general criticism that network governance is not observable in reality in the way the concept suggests.

Damgaard (2006) looked at Danish policy networks, in an attempt to test theory against reality. Damgaard (2006) argues that policy network thinking carries an inherent assumption; that once policy networks exist, what follows is network governance. Damgaard (2006) argues that, even with policy networks in place, this does not follow. Policy networks and other forms of governance can co-exist – two examples of this hybrid are ‘hierarchy in disguise’, and ‘hierarchy by default’. In the former, while there is apparent actor co-operation, in reality the information and the power are one-way flows, so the apparently dynamic network is actually merely a fig-leaf for the continuation of hierarchical governance. In the latter, the network exists and operates, but in a limited way that misses wider policy implications; the structural constraints mean that the network has limited actual power or impact.

Damgaard (2006) argues that the key is the degree of the network's autonomy and the significance of its contribution:

“This means that even politically mandated policy networks may conduct network governing, the determining factor being the character of the involvement in the policy-making process.” (Damgaard 2006, p675)

The state always casts a shadow of hierarchy over the network, argues Damgaard (2006), and government is always tempted to try to control policy networks. A greater degree of hierarchical control means a lesser degree of network governance, since the autonomy of the network is undermined. Damgaard (2006) concludes that the capacity of agents within the network, together with the government's approach, dictate whether the network can be sufficiently autonomous to actually deliver network governance – horizontal networks therefore do not replace hierarchies.

Hendricks and Topps (2005) are also critical of the idea that policy networks automatically imply network governance. Using Dutch neighbourhood projects as a case study they found many examples of networks, but found less evidence that these networks were delivering governance. Rather, Hendricks and Topps (2005) found that certain gifted individuals were operating in the gaps in network governance coverage, and that it was these individuals that were driving projects forward. Thus, in some ways, governance was effective because it was ineffective – it created gaps in coverage, accountability and capacity that were ideal for exploitation by individuals who could make things happen. This effectively turns network governance theory upside down; by implying that networks existed to be inefficient enough to allow opportunities, but then efficient enough to co-operate with these individuals and ‘give them their head’.

These criticisms use evidence from continental Europe, which may be seen to be different to the UK experience in two ways - there was already a longer and deeper history of both decentralised government and governing through consensus; and many European governments had gone less far down the road of NPM than the UK. In addition, the criticisms address implementation issues only – there are arguments to be made about the principles of governance, rather than the fine details or practical implications.

### *c) Criticisms of the development of governance in the UK*

Within the UK, network governance has been seen to be closely associated with New Labour reform, or ‘modernisation’ of public services. Network governance was explicitly proposed by the New Labour administration as a way of addressing the direction towards public services taken by Conservative Governments from 1979 (Goss 2002). Thus, network governance gained prominence and influence after 1997 as not only a conceptual tool but a policy tool.

The incoming Labour government’s explicit intention to employ network governance as a policy tool is important to this study for four reasons. Firstly, the political context enhances understanding of how the current position has emerged, and where it is likely to lead. Secondly, to analyse network governance in the UK today it is important to understand the motivations and aims of the participants, including central government. Thirdly, as with any analysis that carries a political dimension, there is a difference between rhetoric and reality; the two strands must be separated to fully understand what is taking place. Fourthly, critiques can form a useful way of reflecting on received wisdom, and of teasing out the underlying assumptions in a theory that must be challenged to see how robust they are.

Newman (2001) has four main criticisms of the prevailing orthodoxy around New Labour and their desire to implement network governance. First, she argues that New Labour’s political position in 1997 meant a desire to achieve consensus. Because of this, NPM measures such as performance indicators, strategic planning and agency status were largely retained (and often increased) after 1997. The result is a messy modernisation process where no one type of governance emerged, based on a muddled mixture of politically expedient approaches (Newman 2001).

Second, Newman (2001) claims that New Labour’s language has led to a greater belief in the rise of network governance than has actually been the case. New Labour has always had a great concern about language and its power. Newman (2001) does not imply that the rhetoric is empty, but instead that it does not represent a substantial shift in actual policy:

“These discourses provided new, legitimate subject positions and identities for social actors, even though they did not directly determine social action.”  
(Newman 2001, p168)

Third, Newman (2001) cites the coexistence of neo-liberal reforms and network governance as a change in power structures, but not the one perceived by many commentators. The arms-length nature of many reforms (devolution of some powers, quality regimes, standards, audit mechanisms) implied that actors were increasingly self-regulating while government was stepping back and relinquishing power. In fact, argues Newman (2001), governmental power was dispersed but not diminished, and actually increased in some ways in its range and depth.

Fourth, Newman (2001) criticises theories of governance for failing to address issues of representation, and the underlying power imbalances that can result. In the context of 1997 onwards, she claims that inequalities and biases have been increased by examples of network governance, since policies aimed at public involvement or consultation invariably perpetuate the imbalances that already exist. Her analysis offers a counterpoint to classic network governance theory about change and power distribution.

This section has provided the range of theory-based critiques aimed at network governance theory. It has demonstrated how these concerns will feed into consideration of the data emerging from this research’s two case studies. The next section updates these critiques with an important new development – where previously-supportive commentators on network governance have, in the light of experience, had something of a change of heart.

## Section 5 – Recent Developments

In the past few years, there has been a further development in ideas about network governance. Some of its strongest champions have experienced a change of heart. For some, this is evidence that network governance as a concept is no longer valid; that it has been undermined by the relative lack of demonstrable empirical evidence of its existence. However, the changing picture is a little more nuanced.

Stoker (2011) now argues that previous definitions of network governance overplayed (and underplayed) some issues. In particular, Stoker (2011) argues that the concept of ‘soft power’ as a network’s means of doing business was overplayed; by contrast, the ‘hard power’ involved in controlling resources, access to political power, the remnants of hierarchical control, and the sheer pressure of having a public mandate, were underplayed. The upshot, argues Stoker (2011), is that network governance has turned out to be less all-pervasive, and more limited, than was argued in the 1990s.

Bevir and Rhodes, both originally pioneers of network governance theory, have also re-thought the concept. Bevir (2011) agrees with Stoker that the forces of centralisation and hierarchical control have been more resilient than some commentators previously anticipated. In particular, Bevir (2011) cites the growing role of indirect controls, such as audit and inspection; this allows the apparent structures of governance to change, while central control of local services remains effectively in place. The outcome impacts upon local services’ degree of latitude.

In addition, commentators looking at the performance of networks have often concluded that they have failed to break a centralised, hierarchical control. Kokx and van Kempen (2010), Kenis and Provan (2009) and Ansell and Gash (2008) are among those to find that the degree of central control remains strong, often crucially so. This presents a picture of network governance failing to take root, and failing to deliver (see also Borzel, 2011).

In response, both Bevir and Rhodes have sought to acknowledge that their initial premise of network governance development has not come to pass: they have shifted their stance instead to a more interpretative approach (Bevir 2011, Rhodes 2011). They



look more closely at the aims, motives and belief systems of individuals within the system; there is less emphasis on processes or structures. In doing so, they present a more nuanced picture that accepts that network governance operates within a maelstrom of conflicting influences, histories, contexts and power relationships.

Does this mean that Bevir and Rhodes' initial (1996, 2000, 2004) analysis was wrong, or that network governance does not exist?

A plausible explanation runs as follows. In the 1990s, some commentators rushed to see network governance as a panacea for perceived 'ills' of fragmented services, market inadequacies, inequality, the rise of 'wicked issues' and of supranational bodies. Because the rhetoric of the day and intended changes in government style were also prevalent, the view of network governance became over-optimistic. In particular, Rhodes' (1996) assertions that governance and networks were synonymous, and that network governance was becoming (or had become) the predominant form of governance, was overstated. The reality was always messier; the situation more complex; the changes partial and often unintentional.

Likewise, reports of network governance's demise are also overdone. Many more networks now exist, and 'network' as a concept has become far more rooted in society generally than was the case twenty years ago (Borgatti 2009). The rise of internet social networks, and the way in which mobile telephone systems and technology are designed, point to a world in which 'network' as a concept is more readily understood and accepted. Many aspects of public policy are now controlled or influenced by various forms of network.

Kenis and Provan (2009) suggest that networks are difficult to judge in terms of their performance using existing or previous notions of performance measurement: it may be that networks are operating more effectively than is generally acknowledged. Networks continue to operate (especially in the UK) in a centralised environment, where government seeks to control and where power and influence are hoarded. This means that networks do not necessarily fulfil the idealised model laid out for them; but nor are they imaginary or immaterial. Where they lie on the continuum - between ideal model

and imaginary - forms part of this research, which assesses the extent to which a partnership fulfils the criteria of network governance.

Overall, network governance continues to have relevance. The exact nature of a network's role varies, and is in flux. However, it continues to exert influence on public policy; it continues to be part of the *modus operandi* of many public servants; it continues to operate within the public space where policy decisions are contested and implemented; it continues to differ from both hierarchical and market-based approaches. Notwithstanding the various critiques of network governance, it remains a useful tool in assessing any of the impact of governance since 1997. While acknowledging that it has its critics, and is by no means a comprehensive and fully evidenced explanation of the whole field, it provides a good baseline for further investigation.

This section brings up to date the criticisms and developments in the theoretical field of network governance. It concludes by asserting that network governance is still a relevant and important concept in public services. As such, it will form an intrinsic part of this research. To do so, the research must develop a usable definition of network governance, which can be operationalized to allow analysis of the case study material. This definition is developed in the next section.

## Section 6 A working definition of network governance

The previous sections in the chapter have presented the development of network governance as a concept and theory, and discussed various aspects of the theory through the prism of critique. This section looks at how to develop a detailed definition of network governance, which can be used in the analysis of the two case studies under consideration.

Many commentators have commented on the difficulty of establishing a clear and unanimously-agreed definition of network governance (or, indeed, of governance). It was shown in the previous section how even those commentators who were enthusiastic about network governance and what it is, have shifted their position over time. Indeed, Stoker's (2011) view of network governance echoes the Queen of Hearts in *Alice in Wonderland* – it means 'whatever I want it to mean'.

Finding a working definition for this thesis is not, then, simply a question of repeating a previously-agreed definition. Instead, the definition is, as was the case in Chapter One for PSE, a synthesis of the available analysis and research. Accordingly, network governance is defined as a combination of the following ten dimensions, which will be used throughout the thesis:

***Agency vs structure*** – a combination of agency and structure, and the interplay between them. Network governance reflects the nature and dynamics of the relationship between the role of the individual, and the structures within which they operate (e.g. Goss 2002, Howlett 2002, Loffler 2004, Borzel 2011)

***Autonomy*** – a high degree of autonomy from government in setting and enacting policy.

(e.g. Rhodes 1996, Goss 2002, Entwistle *et al* 2007)

***Centralisation*** – a clear departure from governance arrangements that reflect hierarchical control from a central government.

(e.g. Howlett 2002, Bevir & Rhodes 2003, Loffler 2004, Kokx & van Kempen 2010)

***Tiers of government*** – the extent, nature and impact of central government structures and layers on the activities and strengths of networks.

(e.g. Pierre and Peters 2000, Newman 2001, Damgaard 2006)

***Trust*** – a high degree of trust between network members, and trust of the network by government. Network governance reflects the extent to which work operates on trust between network members, rather than formalised by contracts or SLAs

(e.g. Rhodes 1996, Kooiman 2003, Ansell & Gash 2008)

***Innovation*** – significant levels of innovation in designing and carrying out policy. Network governance reflects the extent to which new activity exists only because of action by the network

(e.g. Hendricks and Topps 2005, Munro *et al* 2008)

***Interdependence*** – a high degree of interdependence between network members. Network governance reflects the extent to which network members are intertwined or could manage without each other

(e.g. Rhodes 1996, Bevir & Rhodes 2003, Kooiman 2003)

***Openness*** – a coherent system, which still allows entry and exit as part of its on-going dynamic. Network governance reflects the extent to which the network is an open or closed system for new entrants

(e.g. Pierre & Peters 2000, Howlett 2002, Entwistle *et al* 2007)

***Resources*** – a system in which network members negotiate or co-operate over resources

(e.g. Rhodes 1996, Gains 2004)

***NPM structures*** – Network governance is impacted by the extent to which the network represents a demonstrable shift in governance, or continues with previous governance structures and processes

(e.g. Newman 2001, Maesschalk 2003, McDonough 2006)

## Conclusion

The chapter has introduced the concept of network governance – a concept that will be used extensively within this thesis. In doing so, it explained the basis of how network governance came to be identified, and its use as a concept for explaining why previous and current governance types did not explain all that was taking place. Network governance sought to embody changes such as supranational organisations, a more complex society, and the attempt to tackle ‘wicked’ social problems that appeared to cut across the more formal structures of other governance types.

The chapter explained the ideas behind network governance, but also looked at existing criticisms of those ideas. There is no widespread consensus on the existence, or practical demonstrations, of network governance. While many champion both the concept and its usefulness; others cite a lack of empirical evidence, and potential shortcomings in its use as a theoretical concept for detailed explanation and prediction.

However, it also seems apparent that network governance – while far from perfect – offers a set of ideas that are useful as research tools and parameters. It offers a potential explanation of how NPM and market-based thinking has been adapted.

The thesis will, via the case studies, explore and illuminate the extent to which network governance can be identified as an observable feature of the public service landscape; it therefore offers further empirical evidence about the existence, use and impact of network governance in current public policy.

Having established the nature and basic arguments of network governance, it is now necessary to link network governance to the PSE. It is necessary to do this to establish how the two concepts can be studied in parallel. Studying in parallel enables an analysis of whether, or how, the two co-exist and influence each other. Part of the *raison d’etre* of this thesis is that PSE and network governance have not been studied together before. The next chapter therefore looks at the potential connections between network governance and PSE.

## **CHAPTER THREE – PSE AND NETWORK GOVERNANCE**

### **Introduction**

Chapter Two looked at the concept of network governance. It established how network governance had developed as a potential explanation of (and response to) issues that seemed beyond the reach of existing forms of governance. Network governance also sought to reflect a changing view by government on how services should be delivered, and the role that government could (and should) play in this.

This chapter pulls together the threads of previous chapters, by connecting network governance and PSE. This is the crux of the research – the two concepts can be studied together, and each will give insights into the other by doing so. This is possible because there are some connecting elements in both concepts; and because they both take place within a similar context of public service delivery. However, as well as comparing network governance and PSE, the research can contrast the two: there are areas where there are potential gaps in understanding of each concept, which may be relevant.

In the first section, parallels are drawn between many of the notions within both network governance and PSE – how they mirror each other, and how they may differ.

In the second section, these potential connections are placed into context. The political situation in 1997 is important; it shaped how policy was both envisaged and enacted. Each has important implications for both PSE and network governance, and for the possible links between them. This section ends with a summary of how different governance styles might reflect upon the PSE.

In the third section, there is an examination not just of the possible connections between PSE and network governance, but also of the potential gaps. This is particularly relevant to the thesis, as the research aims to provide a contribution to new understanding. Since PSE and network governance have not been studied together before, this section offers potential ideas for what might be discovered in the research.

## **Section 1 Network Governance and PSE**

There have been no direct studies of PSE and network governance, and their impact on each other (this represents a gap in existing knowledge). In part this may be because network governance is relatively new, in both concept and in evidence about its existence and consequences. Conclusions about network governance and PSE must therefore be inferred from existing theory and analysis.

A key question to consider from the outset is the purpose of the network. Rhodes (1996) argued that the term ‘governance’ could include ‘good governance’ – the normative expression often used by supranational bodies for public administration embodying fairness, impartiality and transparency. These qualities would clearly fit with a PSE. However, Newman (2001) made the point that ‘good’ governance and network governance could be two different things. So the existence of network governance is certainly not an automatic signpost that a PSE is operating.

A second question to consider is what particular networks do? For example, a network of award-winners in the public sector might exist to share good ideas, and act as a general sounding-board for broad ideas about public service. It would be perfectly possible for a PSE to survive, and even thrive, under such circumstances. The PSE could flourish because there is relatively little political pressure; no resources are being committed; no budgets are under threat; and the aim of the network is too broad to be contentious.

However, a network brought together to decide drug policies for an area might be a different matter. In this example there will be resource arguments, philosophical and practical differences, and more than one government department with a vested interest in the outcome (with the concomitant political pressures). Here, it is easier to envisage a PSE being squeezed by narrow sectional interests, pragmatism over time and money, and political considerations (in a more concentrated way than within traditional cross-departmental working). Thus, the exact purpose of a network may be a determining factor in its impact on the PSE.

On the other hand, in the examples above, it could be argued that it is exactly these cross-cutting issues that might allow a PSE to come to the fore: agents would need to discuss what is in the wider common good, possibly making some sacrifices themselves. Network governance theory suggests that one of the main reasons why network governance is coming to prominence is the difficulty of so-called ‘wicked’ issues. In this argument, solving wicked issues would enhance the public interest, and need not be done in a partisan or unfair way. While the public servant would need to consider carefully how to protect the PSE under such circumstances, it is not impossible to do so. The public interest forms a vital discussion area within the thesis research.

There is a key point to consider here about network governance and power. For some (Rhodes 1996) the focus is on the shift of power from centralised government to network actor, which is implied in the change to network governance. Supporters of this idea see a diminution of power for government, as power switches to the network. For others such as Damgaard (2006), this is an assumption which cannot be met by evidence. Commentators such as Newman (2001) view the transfer of power as illusory, but an illusion that suits the government and the rhetoric it wants to use.

In terms of the PSE, the power of governance and who holds it is a relevant issue. If power is held centrally (or regionally/locally) by the state, then *theoretically* a public servant can act on behalf of the whole state. In doing so, the public servant has an opportunity to serve the wider public interest, and to consider what is in the public good when making decisions. However, if power is now transferred to the network, where does this opportunity lie? The network may or may not have a brief or aim to serve a wider public need (Elcock 2011). Generally, the network is there to focus on the network’s business. It is this nexus of interests which creates the mutual trust between agents; the mutual trust creates the negotiations which allow the network to thrive. The public servant in such a situation does not have the explicit wider context to consider, and this may undermine the PSE as a result. The question of whether networks damage PSE is a fundamental part of this research.

There is a further aspect of power that should be considered. In a hierarchy, the power lies with senior public servants and ministers, and is administered down the chain (Damgaard 2006). In NPM, the market is held as the determinant of power, balancing



producer and customer/client considerations (Hood 1991, in Laffin 1998). In a network, power lies with a combination of two things; the agents of the network, and the entity that controls the structure of the network. This entity will normally be the state, although even this power may be devolved by the state (to a regulator, for example). The more the power structures become blurred and multiplied, the more it could be argued that the public servant needs a PSE in which to 'ground' decisions and behaviour. But securing such an ethos may be more difficult if power is diffused – there will be competing aims and shared resources: factors that dilute control.

A corollary to this lies in the exact role of the public servant within network governance. Does it make a difference whether the public servant concerned is a member of the network, or a member of the state body that controls the structure of the network? If the latter, it could be argued that the room for a PSE exists, in the sense that the public servant is focused on wider, more strategic considerations and understands for whom they are carried out; the state is still the master, and so the ethos fits fairly easily into this scenario. However, if the public servant is an agent in the network itself, the issue becomes more blurred. The public servant has a duty to participate in the network and help the network to operate – this, in itself, can help the public good. But in doing so, the network may undermine the public servant's impartiality, by calling for split loyalties. The public servant may find himself/herself representing interests within the network, rather than the wider public interest (Elcock 2011).

Rhodes (1996) and Elcock (2011) have characterised this internal focus as an accountability deficit that may be intrinsic in networks: in this context, it can be seen as a potential barrier to displaying a PSE. Particularly at practitioner level, a public servant embracing the PSE can act on behalf of the dispossessed, or those lacking in eloquence or power. This is often part of the discretion that is built into the job. However, networks often lack representation by such groups; if the public servant does not speak up, they are not acting on behalf of those dispossessed. But if they do speak up, they are acting as a *de facto* representative of those groups, when this might not be their role, and it militates against impartiality. Moreover, it may hinder the network for such views to be considered, and part of the PSE might be considered the efficient administration of public policy. Therefore, the unrepresentative nature of a network, and the power imbalances it may contain, can create a PSE dilemma for officials.

Allied to this is the question of accountability. Alongside the power transfer said to be part of the move towards network governance, is a transfer of accountability. The process and the discussions by which policy matters are resolved can become opaque or intangible. This undermines the PSE by diluting transparency and the visibility of due and fair process; it also opens the process up to producer capture or special interests (Elcock 2011). Both can threaten the PSE or inhibit its development.

One major aspect of networks that has resonance with the PSE would be the degree of trust and negotiation involved. It is often cited as a criticism of NPM that the contractual basis of many relationships undermines the PSE, because it invites an absence of trust between professionals (Lawton 2004). By contrast, network governance works on the basis of trust in two ways. Firstly, the government steps back and trusts networks to find and implement solutions (at least theoretically – this is subject to challenge). Secondly, agents must trust each other – the network is based on mutuality and on interdependent relationships between agents. Such a climate should encourage a PSE: it trusts and values professionals while working towards a shared and common goal which is wider than individual aims. However, it could be argued that the degree of negotiation (which will inevitably involve compromise) means that the public servant needs a philosophical ‘grounding’; otherwise, there is a risk that compromise will undermine basic tenets of a PSE, just as contractual negotiation can threaten it.

In addition, the question must be asked about the true impact of network governance. This is the subject of considerable debate; some argue that it is the pre-eminent form of governance in the UK today (Rhodes 1996); others argue that its importance is overstated and that hierarchy has altered but not reduced (Damgaard 2006). The distinction is relevant for the future of the PSE. If networks are important, or increasingly so, in the governance of the UK; then their impact on the PSE matters profoundly - not least, for the maintenance or development of the ethos. If, however, they are more peripheral because hierarchical power is maintained in different forms, the impact on the PSE is lessened. Alternatively, if both networks and hierarchies are operating – and especially if they are in competition or are counteracting each other in some way – the impact on the PSE is changed again. The nature of their interaction and development is a fundamental part of the research question for this thesis.

The thesis aims to provide some evidence on this issue, in two connected ways. First, the extent to which network governance attributes can be seen in modern multi-agency partnerships. Second, an analysis of how the balance of network/hierarchy has played out in terms of impact upon the PSE.

The section has outlined the ways in which PSE and network governance might, in theoretical terms, be connected. It has suggested possible ways in which this influence might play out. The next section places such connections in the context of the post-1997 political environment, which itself had an impact on both network governance and PSE. This also places the cases studies used for the research into a political setting.

## **Section 2 - 1997 onwards: networks and a new PSE?**

The section assesses how networks came to prominence in the late 1990s. It provides a background for both network governance and PSE, as well as setting context for the case studies used in the research.

Before the 1997 general election, political debate revolved around perceived failures or inadequacies of 1979-1997 policies, and how governance should change. However, much of the rhetoric around public service provision remained the same. The incoming government did not seek to sweep away most of the pre-1997 changes; rather, they sought to adapt and add to them. There was no outright repudiation of NPM; instead a subtle change of stance towards consensus-building, more co-operation between government bodies, and accepting the cross-silo nature of the problems at hand (Newman 2001, Giddens 2003).

Part of the government's approach after 1997 was centred on the building of networks as a form of governance. It is possible to overstate the extent of this trend (Bevir 2011). In many ways NPM strictures were tightened and extended, especially through centralising control over public services; a *quid pro quo* for increased public spending. But in many areas, additional funding was tied to proof of a network approach to service provision. Extra funding was often given after a competitive bid process, which centred on inter-agency co-operation in identifying issues, and sharing resources. Many government processes and procedures held an explicit assumption that networks, affiliations, joint controls and teams would form part of future service provision (Lowndes & Sullivan 2004).

Implications for PSE were perhaps less profound than in 1979; simply because the change in governance was less pronounced. By keeping most NPM measures begun in the previous era, much of the previous approach to PSE was retained. Increased centralisation was partly a reminder to public servants that government did not altogether trust them: many processes, procedures and objectives were set centrally and closely monitored for compliance. This implied that reliance on facets of PSE once taken for granted (e.g. probity, consistency, expertise), was far from being resurrected. In fact, compliance with centrally-decided intentions was a key feature of this era – the boom in auditing and inspection, and significantly increased reporting requirements for

public services, suggested the government did not fully believe in PSE. Instead, government felt such matters should be dictated and checked; not assumed to occur because of the prevailing ethos (Lawton 2004, O'Toole 2006).

Where network governance did take place, PSE implications might be interpreted in three ways. Firstly, that government felt there was an existing and uniform PSE across different parts of the public sector, enabling different services to form a network. This meant accepting certain key features of a network - uniformity of purpose; similarity of context; and equality of power preventing either power imbalances within networks, or 'producer capture' of policy itself. It would also imply acceptance by government of both PSE, and its desirability.

Alternatively, government support of more powerful networks could imply the government felt that either there was no effective PSE, or that PSE was different in each public service – hence the need to force agencies to come together, often via financial controls or legislation. Without forcing, it could be argued, public services would pursue their own agendas; because either their PSE was unique to them, or PSE was too weak to counteract bureaucratic self-interest.

A third option is that government did not think about PSE at all. It can be argued that prevailing rhetoric since 1979, continuing after 1997, focused on improving measurable performance and efficiency. PSE is rarely discussed when public policy is being considered, and rarely mentioned by politicians championing the latest manifesto. It could be concluded that the push towards network governance reflected other concerns, and not PSE. Such concerns included practical considerations ('what matters is what works'), keeping certain groups 'onside' (e.g. financial markets, unions, media), or being seen to take action or make changes. Moving towards networks may have been simply a pragmatic policy solution, giving distance from previous ideas, but not too much distance: PSE implications may have been disregarded completely.

Since 1997 the application of network governance is patchy, mixed in with many NPM measures remaining from, or strengthened since, 1997 (Newman 2001). Where network governance has been implemented, the implications for PSE are unclear. It is equally unclear what introducing network governance implies for the government's *view* of PSE – that government thinks there is no PSE, that PSE is fragmented, or PSE is firm

but must be controlled and redirected? The thesis explores the views of public servants on this.

These two issues – the magnitude of network governance, and subsequent impact on the PSE – need to be explored. The next section considers potential gaps and connections between PSE and network governance that are already demonstrable from theory. The connections allow the design of suitable research, and act as starting points for analysis and debate. The gaps indicate potential areas of new learning and fresh understanding resulting from the research.

### **Section 3 - PSE and network governance: connections and gaps**

To consider the impact of network governance on PSE it is necessary to show linkage between the two areas.

Firstly, both are concerned with public policy and public services. Network governance focuses on the organisation of policy development and implementation; PSE on the philosophy underpinning what services are delivered, and how. There is clear overlap in decisions of how to deliver services and under what circumstances, and the importance of public servants in planning and implementing policy.

Secondly, both are concerned with issues of trust. In network governance – theoretically - there is an explicit trust placed in network members (Kooiman 2003, Ansell & Gash 2008). They are deemed to be responsible and professional enough to be involved (in theory) in designing and delivering public services, accepted as part of governance, with an important role to play. This degree of trust is tested in the thesis research. The network's position, accountability, and powers all indicate the members are overtly part of the governing process – this theoretically implies trust from central government and ministers, to public servants at the network level. In network governance theory this trust extends across network members, implying shared values and beliefs, and interdependence coupled to network autonomy from government.

Likewise, PSE demonstrates trust from senior officials to the front-line. Accepting and nurturing PSE implies that public servants can be trusted to exhibit traits and consistencies that aid service delivery and enhance the public good. PSE is not a series of targets, cannot be easily overtly monitored or reported upon; it is, in some ways, an act of faith. Without trust, there can be no effective PSE.

Thirdly, both PSE and network governance accept that societal problems are complex (or 'wicked'), requiring flexible and adaptable services; they are difficult to quantify or measure; strict managerialism will not be successful; public servants need to demonstrate considerable professional expertise; and implementation requires negotiation between groups and organisations. Network governance seeks to build a new framework of governance, where networks have significant control and ownership.

Acknowledging PSE means acknowledging the professionalism of public servants - their commitment to solving problems and delivering services; and the need for an underpinning philosophy behind flexible responses and detailed negotiations. Questions of autonomy and trust form part of the thesis research.

These connections do not mean that network governance and PSE are synonyms. Just as crucially, there are major areas of potential difference.

The most significant difference lies in accountability. Network governance is a response to, and development from, more hierarchical forms of governance. Top-down administration has its drawbacks, but a perceived strength lies in clear lines of accountability, and a clear focal point for citizen input. Network governance runs counter to this; in many ways, it is anti-democratic. Power lies with public servants who, as a network, offer confused lines of responsibility and more opaque accountability (Elcock 2011). Even supporters of network governance seem to accept this limitation. Networks can be closed systems - groups following narrow sectional interests, not wider community benefit. A network's tendency to attract like-minded people can result in 'groupthink'; in power terms, they can become an oligopoly or monopoly (Elcock 2011). At best, they run the risk of being paralysed by debate and difficult to steer.

By contrast, PSE is very much about accountability; explaining why decisions are taken or not taken, why the service is delivered in that particular way for the overall benefit of society. PSE implicitly backs the judgement of officials, who may be seen to 'know what's good for the citizen'; but PSE also allows individual officials to take responsibility. Part of PSE notions of fairness and impartiality lie in the corollary responsibility to explain to citizens. This is not the same as responsiveness – the citizen's complaint may not lead to change; citizens are concerned with their personal circumstances but the public official must have a wider and longer view. The fact remains that accountability is a key component of PSE, but not necessarily of network governance.

A second example of difference would be loyalty. Members of a governance network have a number of loyalties, but prominent among these is a loyalty to the group. The



network operates as a group of interdependent individuals and organisations, who have a vested interest in continued high-trust relationships with each other. While the network has other responsibilities and loyalties, allegiance to the group and its aims is significant. By contrast, PSE focuses on loyalty beyond the individual and organisation, to the wider public. Loyalty in PSE is most prominent when viewing public interest, and a wider and longer perspective than organisation, partnership or immediate goals.

Taking together the connections and differences outlined above, it is possible that one (or both) of two scenarios are at play.

In the first scenario network governance supports PSE: it cements trust and devolves responsibility from central government to local officials; it upgrades and recognises the professionalism of public servants; and it provides a structure within which shared aims and philosophies can thrive.

In the second scenario, network governance militates against a flourishing PSE, and may actively oppose it. Networks become a closed system where personalities matter more than structures; a framework rewarding negotiation along narrow sectional interests not community good; and a system that discourages impartiality and equality of access.

Which scenario reflects reality? There has been no explicit research into the impact of network governance on PSE. This study aims to discover which scenario is occurring (perhaps both), why, and how. The fundamental research question of this study is therefore:

***What is the nature of the PSE in 2009/10, the extent of network governance within Community Safety Partnerships, and the potential impact of network governance arrangements upon the PSE?***

## Conclusion

The chapter displayed and explored connections between network governance and PSE – these included issues of agency, power, trust, accountability, the public interest, the complexity of modern public issues, the reliance upon individual expertise, involvement in planning as well as delivering public services.

The chapter also showed potential scenarios where PSE and network governance might work hand-in-hand, operate almost independently of each other, or be at genuine crossed purposes. It is not clear which scenario is currently operating, because such research has not been conducted. This thesis aims to begin the plugging of that gap.

In an era where partnership is a strong element of public services, there is a need to look at the exact nature of that partnership – the degree to which it reflects the policy ideas that established it; the nature of its impact upon a PSE that is instrumental in how public services are delivered. This thesis aims to explore that nexus.

The next chapter - Chapter Four - outlines the context of the case studies (Chapter Five explains how and why the case studies were selected). It looks at the development and implementation of Community Safety Partnerships (CSPs) in England and Wales. It examines their *raison d'être*, how and why they were organised, and differences between England and Wales. Two of these CSPs form the case studies used in the research.

## **CHAPTER FOUR – ANALYSIS OF CRIME AND DISORDER REDUCTION PARTNERSHIP (CDRP) POLICY**

### **Introduction**

The chapter sets the context for the case studies, providing a background of the partnerships, as well as the political background to those partnerships.

The creation of Crime and Disorder Partnerships (CDRPs) in England and Wales stemmed from the Crime and Disorder Act (CDA) 1998. [*CDRPs were subsequently re-named Community Safety Partnerships (CSPs).*] The CDA was an early piece of legislation for the incoming Labour government: a flagship for the language, philosophy, approach and intent of that administration. The genesis and repercussions of the CDA are part of a longer debate about crime prevention and governance. The CDA was an overt attempt to bring network governance structure to an area of public service: the legislation created local networks of stakeholders, to deliver local services against an overarching central framework.

This chapter assesses the origins of the ideas in the CDA, and how and why the legislation was framed. It includes academic analysis of the impact and meaning of the CDA and its provisions, creating a context for viewing current practice.

The first section analyses the period up to 1997. It charts the main arguments around crime reduction; the shift from a purely neo-liberal agenda towards a more communitarian approach; and how this shift fitted with political realities for the Labour Party.

In the second section, the introduction of the CDA 1998 is covered – how the Act was implemented, the meaning behind its introduction, and implications uncovered by commentators on its effectiveness and impact.

The third section assesses the nature of the political debate, the shaping of policy and its subsequent enactment, in terms of the PSE and network governance. In doing so, it sets

the scene for subsequent chapters that explain the methodology, assess the results of research, and analyse the consequences.

## **Period 1: Up to the mid-1990s**

### ***Background***

The traditional political view of UK law and order was of an area of political strength for the Conservatives, and weakness for Labour. This began to change around the end of the 1980s (Tonry 2003), for three reasons.

Firstly, despite many initiatives and a tightening of criminal legislation, crime levels continued to rise: from 2.69 million recorded offences in 1980, to 5.56million in 1992 (Home Office 2014). At first the government's explanation for this rise related to economic recession and unemployment levels (Crawford 1999). But the end of the 1980s saw an economic boom, and rising crime levels – the 'trade off' of economic growth and crime no longer seemed to hold. This undermined the Conservative image as the 'natural party of law and order' (Tonry 2003).

Secondly, changes suggested that crime was more complex than legislation implied. Studies showed connections between crime and diverse social trends such as income inequality, unemployment, technological changes, and family breakdown (Crawford 1999). Crime began to be seen as a highly complex issue, with linkages to other aspects of society and policy (Clarke 2003). The view suggested by legislation - that economic arguments could explain crime levels, and offer ways of reducing them - seemed insufficient. This fuelled ideas that tackling crime needed to cross traditional silos of government – a multi-agency response (Hughes 2002).

Thirdly, in the USA in 1992 Bill Clinton was elected as President. This not only heralded new policies in the USA that were eagerly watched in the UK (for example, Clinton's 'welfare to work' programme and an overt, stated focus on education), but was a significant political change in its own right (Gilling 2007). The impact on the Labour Party was profound: it demonstrated that a right-wing government could be outmanoeuvred on a policy area previously felt to be 'natural' territory for the right of the political spectrum. This impression spilled over into Labour's crime policy - as Gilling (2007) points out, it established the idea that political opponents did not have the right to 'own' issues.

### *The shift away from traditional crime policy*

Given this background, the production of the Morgan report in 1991 (Home Office 1991) started a new debate about crime policy, which ultimately led to the CDA 1998. The Morgan report followed up a Home Office circular (8/84), which had exhorted police and local authorities work together on crime prevention (Crawford 1999). The Morgan report was the first official document to use terminology such as ‘partnership’ and ‘community safety’ (Morgan 1991, in Gilling 2007). Given the subsequent stress on discourse, this was important in itself:

“Names matter because their use infers [sic] the existence of approaches to controlling crime that differ in terms of what the problem is to be addressed, who does it, how it is done, and with what consequences beyond the obvious one of controlling crime.” (Gilling 2007, p3)

The Conservative government, having initiated the Morgan report, rejected its findings. The report’s recommendations cut across the basic ideology of the Conservative government (Crawford 1999). The report proposed more state involvement and a more communal view of society. The prevailing neo-liberal stance had created crime policy as what O’Malley (1992, in Gilling 2007) called ‘privatised prudentialism’: the concerned and self-interested individual, not concepts of community or society. The individual responded individually, based on the individual’s self-interest: there was little policy concern for societal interest, communal working, or partnership. ‘Privatised prudentialism’ meant providing private and economic incentives for certain behaviour; an economics-based argument where individual benefit could be demonstrated, but possibly with a *side-effect* of communal benefit.

Crime reduction initiatives such as Neighbourhood Watch; security devices such as alarms and lights; target-hardening programmes - all were designed along neo-liberal lines, because they required a combination of rational action by the private individual, and laissez-faire government (Garland 2001, in Gilling 2007). Neo-liberalism included a tolerance of widening inequality, and a philosophical commitment to personal individual freedom. The corollary was crime prevention techniques that appealed to

rational decision-making – e.g. ‘do this and your insurance premiums will go down’. The actuarial approach fitted with the neo-liberal principle that an economic argument could change behaviour (Garland 2001, in Gilling 2007).

The stress on individual, rational and economics-based arguments mattered in public policy decisions, because it was the prevailing orthodoxy – it was a structural constraint to change (Gilling 2007). It mattered because it linked crime policy with social and economic policy, on a philosophical basis. It also cemented the role of the police as the primary provider of crime prevention and reduction (Crawford 1999, in Gilling 2007). It was into this context that Labour’s ‘Third Way’ would subsequently reach.

The government also rejected the Morgan report for pragmatic reasons. First, the Major government distrusted local government as the Thatcher administration had; there was little enthusiasm to trust local authorities with an emotive and important policy area (Johnston and Shearing 2003, in Gilling 2007). Second, the police viewed partnership as diluting their responsibilities and powers and so were, at best, ambivalent (Crawford 1999, in Gilling 2007). The Conservatives viewed the support of the police as a settled matter; they did not wish to threaten this by bringing other agencies onto ‘police turf’. Politically, partnership in crime prevention was untried – there was little agreement on what might work; any wholesale adoption of the idea would be a political gamble with a key policy advantage over Labour.

However for Labour, partnership in crime reduction/prevention represented a way to develop challenging policy on Conservative ‘home ground’; one with a more communitarian sense of government’s role and societal cohesion. Crime was an area of great public concern - success here could create a ‘halo effect’ for Labour’s intention to look like a ‘government in waiting’.

The Morgan report, while rejected by the Conservative government, interested academics, and politicians looking for a new emphasis (Crawford 1999). While there were (and remain) crucial differences between academic and political thinking, there emerged a fragile consensus between many criminologists and left-leaning politicians. The two groups coalesced around the idea that tackling crime must be a wider and deeper approach than before; it must understand connections to other social and

economic issues; it must involve partnerships; it must tackle social division and underlying causes (Tonry 2003). In the longer term, this consensus has broken down somewhat; at this time, it created a momentum towards specific policy.

During the early 1990s, other events pushed forwards the drive towards a 'Third Way'. In 1993, the tragic murder of James Bulger put a fierce spotlight onto crime and how it could be tackled (Squires 2006). The case seemed to showcase the limits of current policy and current thinking. It crystallised a growing public unease about how crime could be tackled; it appeared that government's 'risk management strategy' was insufficient. It also highlighted the role of then shadow Home Secretary, Tony Blair. When John Smith died and Tony Blair became Labour party leader in 1994, the emphasis on crime was a fundamental part of changes to the Labour Party, and winning power in 1997 (Tonry 2003).

For the PSE and network governance, these were crucial times. As Labour looked seriously at partnership within crime policy, and assess how partnerships could operate, a focus on networks emerged. Network governance fitted with the philosophy and practicalities of the policy - it allowed some local control and input, within national frameworks; it allowed interdependent agencies and stakeholders to work together.

In terms of PSE, the early 1990s marked the beginning of genuine alternatives to prevailing neo-liberal orthodoxy in public policy thinking. PSE had struggled under neo-liberalism: policies were based around individuals considering their own short-term, tangible benefit. Less thought was given to longer-term, unintended consequences; the wider and deeper aspects of community benefit, or societal gain. Individual choices meant a lack of collective action, less emphasis on impartial consideration, and greater emphasis on market-based ideology. As crime policy began to alter, it started to consider issues that related to PSE.

### ***Crime policy and the Labour Party***

When Tony Blair began the New Labour 'project' in 1994, he faced a number of problems in creating an electable party. Firstly, neo-liberalism was the prevailing orthodoxy; change meant challenging that orthodoxy and creating a new one. To do this



Blair talked of the 'Third Way'; a philosophy attempting to marry neo-liberalism with social democratic principles (Giddens 2003).

Secondly, there were concerns about how much central government could actually dictate policy and drive it: advocates of network governance (Johnston and Shearing 2003, in Gilling 2007) point to the lack of bottom-up policy at this time, and reluctance of civil servants to fully engage. Edwards and Hughes (2005, in Gilling 2007), Rhodes (1996) and Stoker (2002), all point to the strong centralisation in the UK compared to other western nations:

“...compared to other European states, Britain does appear to invest the centre with more power, particularly in terms of its constitutional ‘right’ to direct local government...which endow it with an ability to more effectively monitor and audit the activities of local practitioners...while policy may not be ‘made’ at the centre, an authoritative, if not necessarily determining, policy agenda will be set or altered there, to which others may have to respond...” Gilling (2007, p17)

Gilling (2007) identified three pragmatic main changes that Blair sought to make:

- ditching ‘clause 4’ – identifying Labour as a changed party, and Blair as very much the leader
- tight communications management – learning from the failure of the Major government to control either party or news agenda; also, a lesson from the Clinton victory
- seeing that politics had moved from crude class divisions to a more pluralistic society; setting up more successful targeting of constituencies

Having begun this ‘modernisation’ process, Blair identified law and order as a key battleground. Economic recovery during the 1990s began to dilute the importance of economics for the electorate; law and order could become a totemic area signalling Labour’s ability to dominate any political battleground:

“...changes to the party’s law and order policies played a major part in enhancing their office-seeking credentials, by neutralising the advantage the Conservatives had enjoyed on the law and order issue...” (Gilling 2007, p57)

Internal Labour party changes took place. The party unshackled itself from issues that the public associated with large-scale disorder (e.g. poll tax riots); it focused rigorously on crime figures and emblematic incidents such as the Bulger case; it capitalised on a perceived government inability (or reluctance) to address social causes of crime outcomes. Blair’s famous ‘tough on crime, tough on the causes of crime’ soundbite came to the fore, signalling policy change as well as the importance of the packaging of a policy (Barnett 2000, in Gilling 2007). It also wedded cause-and-effect, planting the idea that punishment and prevention were not mutually exclusive - which separated Labour from the Conservative doctrine that the answer lay in greater punishment of offenders. Labour began to back certain parts of Conservative crime legislation in Parliament: no longer automatically opposing Conservative ideas presented the party as more pragmatic and less dogmatic. Labour sought to offer something different to the status quo, without rejecting all existing approaches by default.

For network governance, this created a closer connection between government policy and network governance. Policy moved away from individualistic approaches appealing to rational decisions of self-interest; there seemed recognition that top-down, command-and-control approaches were unsuccessful. Network governance offered a way to bring agencies together without losing control of policy direction; to consider wider community needs over a longer time frame.

For PSE, too, this offered a potential route forward. Labour’s policies seemed to offer a more considered view of long-term societal benefit; to look at underlying causes and go beyond the symptoms. Such an approach appeared to fit with PSE notions of wider thinking, long-term approaches, a consideration of unintended consequences, and a stronger role for public services in shaping and implementing policy.

Again taking lessons from Clinton’s victory (Tonry 2003, in Gilling 2007), Blair supported a philosophical approach that became known as the ‘Third Way’. Because

this underpins much of what followed (in particular Community Safety), it is worth unpicking exactly what constituted the Third Way, and how it was put into practice.

### *New Labour and the Third Way*

The essence of the Third Way was political triangulation – keeping parts of Conservative rule that appealed to the electorate, but blending this with a fresh approach to public services and social problems. Using the Third Way in the crime realm involved a closer association of economic and social factors than is immediately apparent (Gilling 2007).

On one level the Third Way was simply a discursive tool to frame arguments. Newman (2001) points out that the Third Way implicitly emphasised the complexity of modern life; from globalisation to solving problems closer to home. It moved away from binary choices, where one choice excluded another. Framed to seem ‘common sense’, the logic flowed so that, once the listener accepted the first premise, what followed seemed ‘inevitable’ or ‘natural’. This made it hard to argue against, once the first die was cast.

On another level, blending neo-liberalism and social democratic ideas implied something else: that much existing neo-liberalism would be retained. For example, part of the neo-liberal response to crime prescribed citizen behaviour in a way that also preserved the economic order (e.g. the protection of public property is a fundamental tenet of most criminal justice systems). This would, according to neo-liberal view, allow the UK economy to continue to be competitive in an increasingly globalised market (Hughes 1996, in Gilling 2007).

To counteract this, the Third Way embraced globalisation and its link to the criminal justice system, but re-framed it. This was presented as a ‘natural’ consequence of present and future trends, and so superior to other ‘simple’ explanations (Newman 2001). The need to be competitive in a globalised world implied responsibilities alongside welfare (appealing to Conservative voters who feared a ‘something for nothing culture’ and again a Clinton idea); it implied a high-trust, communitarian society like many in the economically-successful Far East. The Third Way still insisted

on a normative, morally authoritarian programme, but sought to recognise and identify different aspects to the society it was imposed upon.

There were a number of philosophical problems in this approach, as well as practical ones. Philosophically, it held implicit assumptions about community - how easy it was to identify and engage with; whether it can actually govern itself; how much other factors impinge upon it (Gilling 2007). Many of these aspects were more complex in reality than originally thought, or more difficult to integrate into policy. Coupled to this, 'high-trust communitarianism' was a straight lift from Asian tiger economies of the 1990s (betraying its 'economic competitiveness' roots), and was difficult to transfer to a very different kind of society – Labour underplayed the significance of the complexities of modern British society (ironically: this being a cornerstone of Third Way thinking). For example Britain's unwritten constitutional arrangements, pluralistic society, dislike of overt authoritarian government, and its lack of centralised state planning of economic growth; all these undermined policy transfer from Asian tiger economies. Also, the Third Way still implied moral authoritarianism, but risked merely maintaining or exacerbating existing inequalities (Hughes 1998); it did not seem to be about creating 'more level playing fields'.

Practically, it became hard to avoid the Third Way appearing to 'be all things to all men' and so robbed of impact: it implied an absence of any real ideology, and so created inconsistency (Hughes 2007). Also, the two arguments (neo-liberalism and social democracy) contained fundamental differences; these were hard to reconcile without creating messy compromise that satisfied no-one. For example, neo-liberalism stressed the primacy of market forces and market structures as the basis of economic policy and public service delivery. Implicit in this was laissez-faire government, largely limited to regulating the marketplace and providing supporting infrastructure where the private sector could not. Social democracy saw a larger role for the state: more centralised economic policy, more state provision of services, state protection of certain groups from the full rigour of the market.

This fundamental set of differences between social democracy and neo-liberalism mattered for network governance and for PSE. For the former, social democracy represented a better fit - more consensual; more based around community need and

support structures; more likely to encourage dialogue and co-operation between agencies. For network governance to flourish, the Third Way needed to emphasise social democracy more than neo-liberalism. The same was true for PSE: it benefitted from social democracy's wider view and longer-term perspective; social democracy's wish for greater state involvement fitted with PSE's desire for altruistic public servants helping to shape policy for the common good. The balance of neo-liberalism and social democracy that emerged would be crucial for both PSE and network governance.

Notwithstanding these inherent difficulties, Labour was successfully reinventing itself as a major electoral force by the mid-1990s, and began to prepare for government and the introduction of community safety legislation.

## **Period 2: The Creation of the CDRPs - 1998 onwards**

The previous section outlined the build-up to Labour's 1997 election victory. It analysed the development of Third Way thinking, Labour's changes to increase electability, and policy developments towards a more consensual, networking arrangement. In this section, the implementation of the CDA 1998 is covered by commentators' assessment of its impact and consequences.

### ***The introduction of the Act***

The new Labour administration introduced a partnership arrangement designed to place the partners onto a formal, compulsory footing; partnership legislated as statutory requirement.

Labour intended to contrast the Major government's use of CCTV, target hardening (i.e. 'designing out' crime), and physical equipment such as alarms. Labour wanted partnership co-operation, forcing previously separated authorities such as health and fire services to join into wider community safety roles.

The CDA 1998 and accompanying guidance, while prescribing statutory involvement of agencies (specifically, the police and local authority), sought to allow local agencies to identify local issues and produce local multi-agency solutions to them (Home Office 1998). Even at this stage, there was friction between central prescription and the wish for local partnerships.

The CDA 1998 required a 'crime audit': a comprehensive picture of current community safety within a locality. It used crime figures, and other proxies of local safety – e.g. requests to clean graffiti, numbers of registered drug addicts, figures for burned-out cars, unemployment and education statistics. The audit drew from a variety of sources, and local public consultation, about current problems and priorities. From this, the partnership would produce a three-year strategy, split into action plans with identifiable objectives, timescales and accountabilities. Orthodoxy emerged around the audit and subsequent activity (Gilling and Barton 2005).

As Johnston and Shearing (2003, in Gilling 2007) suggest, this legislation was framed as Third Way thinking, and represent this aim in many ways. The legislation clarifies the need for multi-agency involvement, bypassing traditional government silos. It emphasised looking beyond the symptoms to root causes for issues; community involvement in prioritising; working together and pooling resources where required. This changed expectations from what had gone before (Johnston and Shearing 2003, in Gilling 2007). There was less emphasis on physical changes preventing criminal opportunity, or economic inducements to change behaviour. Instead, there was more focus on group or community solutions, preventative work to shape attitudes, and local decision-making.

The basic tenets of the Act appeared to fit with network governance. An overt and centrally-mandated partnership was created, with formal powers and responsibilities, to work within an overarching framework. The partnership was to create local solutions to local issues, reflecting in part the expertise of network members. However, already there were fears that much local responsibility was actually driven from the centre: apparent network governance was challenged by how much central ‘guidance’ was expected to be followed rigorously.

Likewise, for PSE the legislation appeared ambiguous. The Act appeared to create conditions for PSE to thrive – its focus on underlying factors and longer-term solutions, which fit with PSE principles of long-term societal benefit; the emphasis on partnership and co-operation connected to PSE’s altruistic intent. But the Act and its implementation also showcased a centralising tendency by government, an inherent lack of trust, and doubts about whether the necessary time and space would be given to allow PSE to thrive.

The legislation has been neither repealed, nor significantly altered, by the incoming Coalition government: the principles appear to be accepted by the current government. There have been changes to police authority involvement (the development of Police and Crime Commissioners), but the fundamental tenets of CDA 1998 remain in place today.

### *Problems with the Act in practice*

The CDA 1998 appeared to offer a new perspective and approach. However, many commentators feel that the devil was in the detail, and the reality.

The lack of attention to structures and systems hinted at an NPM-style ‘getting on with business’ attitude. While this might fit the Third Way’s ‘what matters is what works’ mantra, Crawford (1997) argues that those systemic and structural issues were real and significant. Guidance talked of devolved responsibility and local accountability; in reality there was also considerable central control (Hughes 2007). For example, the centre imposed how the crime audit would be conducted; who would conduct this audit; how consultation was conducted; who would work at which level of the partnership (e.g. imposing direct and formal requirements on chief executives and chief constables); dictated national priorities that must feature in plans; required inspections by District Audit (paid for by the partnership). The guidance carried many centrally-imposed conditions and priorities that partnerships were ‘expected’ to include, regardless of local circumstance:

“The inclusion of many of these issues...hint at the possibility that...the Home Office was looking to impose strategic priorities upon CDRPs.”  
(Gilling 2007, p76)

In addition, the legislation fudged the crucial issue of who was involved in partnership working, and how. The new government created three tiers of involvement, depending on the degree of statutory obligation (CDA 1998):

- Police and local authorities were lead players (Hughes 2007); involved from the beginning at a strategic level, with one or other effectively operating as lead authority
- other criminal justice agencies had to co-operate; work on projects on an ad-hoc basis, offer advice, information and support as required by action plans
- other agencies (e.g. fire service) had a watching brief; at this stage sent consultative and strategic documents, but without an identifiable role



Phillips *et al* (2002, in Gilling 2007) identify this as a confusing and partial message, blurring lines of accountability and performance responsibility. Subsequent legislation gave more agencies full statutory obligations, but the initial triple-tier approach diluted impact and sense of involvement for many partner agencies.

*[By the period of this thesis' research, all the agencies mentioned above had full statutory obligations, rather than consultative or ad-hoc involvement. The legacy of partial or gradual involvement influenced their understanding of partnership development, and their view of its present state. This is considered further in Chapters Five, Six and Seven.]*

Further problems were caused by the new partnership's interaction with pre-existing bodies and structures (Hughes 2007). Partnerships suddenly overlapped with existing agencies such as Youth Offending Teams – government seemingly had not anticipated the duplication and confusion. Many agencies had pre-existing strategic plans (forged under other arrangements) that did not dovetail with community safety strategies in time or subject matter (Newman 2001). It took time and effort to co-ordinate approaches to these many layers of community and criminal justice planning (Stoker 2004). Many local authorities (in England) were non-unitary; there were problems identifying how to create contiguous boundaries between (for example) police Basic Command Units, and various local authorities:

“Overall, the point here is that CDRPs were born with some pretty fundamental structural instabilities...” (Gilling 2007, p75)

Many problems connect to the earlier analysis of the ambivalent impact of CDA upon network governance and PSE. The problems identified above relate to lack of trust, an overriding tendency to centralise and dictate, a lack of joined-up thinking and impatience with the time taken (and variety of responses) allowing local policies to develop. For network governance this meant the network lacking space, trust and autonomy to behave as a bona-fide network. For PSE, it meant diluting the altruistic and long-term thinking, local freedom and trust, and communal/societal perspective necessary for PSE.

### ***Government reaction to implementation of the Act***

Having established partnerships in law, the government became impatient for success. Gilling (2007) suggests that, as a flagship policy, the government wished to see quick results, not a protracted ‘bedding-in’ process of agencies adjusting boundaries, work content, strategic documents and processes. Central government impatience led to a drive towards evidence-based practice – itself a minefield of differing views and opinions:

“...it did not take long for the centre to become disillusioned with the performance of CDRPs...although New Labour did not extend the same political antipathy towards local authorities that the Conservatives had shown, their mistrust of ‘provider interests’ produced much the same effect. Consequently, the emphasis upon localism as the route to joined-up policy was gradually replaced by an emphasis upon evidence-based practice and new public management techniques of command and control...” (Gilling 2007, p90)

Labour did not wish to openly criticise and deride local authorities for lack of progress. However, the government wanted ‘quick wins’ and sought evidence-based policy as a proxy for central control (Tonry 2003). Partnerships were expected (Hughes 2007) to adapt ideas seen as successful elsewhere, and share and learn ‘best practice’ - either through dialogue with other partnerships, or via the increasingly strong audit and inspection regime (Clarke *et al* 2000, in Clarke 2004).

However, evidence-based policy is fraught with difficulties, as Gilling (2007) identifies. Evidence-based policy can be partial or location-specific; can have doubt over what is actually known to work; can have issues of implied or assumed causality; tended to focus on volume crime not longer-term work. In short, evidence-based policy seemed ideal in the abstract, but hard to engender, because of limits on knowledge and lessons. Loveday (2006, p122 in Squires 2006) gives an example:

“In evidence to the Committee of Public Accounts, a senior Home Office official commented that the extent to which partnerships had contributed to the reduction in crime was in the nature of things ‘inherently unknowable’. Yet that would not impede in any way the Home Office from setting yet further crime reduction targets over the next three years for every CDRP...”

Other central policies that should have aided partnerships during their crucial early years, instead acted at cross-purposes. Some government departments had not completely ‘bought-in’ to partnerships, and diverted resources and support away from them. The Home Office established Crime Reduction Programmes, but directed these to police not partnerships; too many strings were attached to funding streams, and the embryonic partnerships found them hard to access (e.g. requirements for connected work that new partnerships could not yet deliver); the Home Office remained isolated from partnerships, and only later established regional Crime Directorates to address this shortfall.

Compounding the problems, other government departments introduced reforms for police and local authorities that cut across crime reduction work (Hughes 2002). Other policy changes – aimed at addressing perceived democratic deficits, or improving community renewal – were introduced by the ODPM. Agencies struggled to please a multitude of masters, and ended up pleasing none (Phillips 2002, in Gilling 2007). As impatience grew with what government saw as paper compliance but not genuine progress, the government made further adjustments: seeking to remedy perceived shortfalls rather than allowing existing changes to take root.

Baggott (2005) noted similar problems in other policy developments – for example, increasing public participation and patient involvement in health policy – that suggests an endemic issue within UK governance that is not restricted to community safety or crime. Such problems included overlap/superceded by other policies; national politicians ‘stepping in’ and directing; incoherent and overly-narrow structures and aims; lack of integration with existing performance management structures.

All these issues connect to the issues outlined earlier in the chapter – that CDA would, despite good intentions, produce a mixed impact on network governance and PSE. For

PSE, the lack of trust in the government's impatience and tendency for centralisation boded ill – PSE requires trust from above, and autonomy locally. The impatience with implementation suggested the necessary degree of long-term, wider and societal thinking of PSE would not be given room.

For network governance, the initial implementation problems and government's subsequent reaction, suggested full network governance might not take root. The government had decreed much of the business and structure, and directed processes (e.g. tight audits) to maintain this posture: this amounted to partial network governance, possibly engendering the worst of both localisation and centralisation.

Other commentators identified further problems partnerships which they see continuing even today. Loveday (2006, in Squires 2006) sees a democratic deficit – the community insufficiently involved in partnerships. Loveday feels the introduction of Neighbourhood Policing Teams since 2006 (especially as they acquire resources from other agencies) may address this, providing lower-level but more visible links to partnership. These neighbourhood teams developed from 2006-2010, but cuts in police officer and (especially) Community Support Officer numbers mean their role and impact have recently been diluted.

Hughes (2007) mentions a lack of genuine community involvement – professionals (even when willing to do so) find it hard to identify community engagement, who represents that community, and what represents a community view. Even if they do so, professionals remain accountable and responsible for policies; there is an inherent imbalance if communities demand and expect, but professionals are responsible.

Button (2006, in Squires 2006) looks at the involvement of the private sector: while the Third Way championed public agencies working together, the Labour government encouraged the involvement of the private sector. This can be seen (Garland 2001, in Gilling 2007) as 'what matters is what works', and the Third Way's aim of marrying neo-liberal use of private sector resources to social democratic public provision. However, Button (2006, in Squires 2006) feels definitions of public and private are bleeding into each other (e.g. what constitutes public or private space), outstripping government's ability to create accountability and control.

Ultimately, commentators such as Squires (2006) believe the current reality for partnerships is almost that they have come full circle – in danger of reducing their scope and vision to narrow crime reduction: Squires cites the involvement of communities as recipients of policy, not active partners. Squires also cites the transition of government guidance, as government looked further for ‘quick wins’:

“[Partnerships] were cautioned against generating unachievable aspirations around vague ‘quality of life’ criteria or unspecified perceptions of problems...Undoubtedly, in this shift from ‘community safety’ to crime and disorder reduction, something was being lost.” (Squires 2006, p241)

This impatience is an important point for network governance and PSE. Both require high levels of trust and autonomy to operate fully. The narrowing of focus suggested by Squires militates against trust and autonomy, for four reasons. Firstly, they implicitly suggest a lack of trust, because they are government reaction to a perceived lack of progress. Second, they reduce responsibility and therefore options for innovation. Third, they reduce autonomy by insisting that partnerships focus on what government deems a priority. Fourth, for PSE is the added dilemma of government short-termism, when PSE demands a longer and wider view.

Finally, Hughes (2007) notes the original aims of CDA 1998 were undermined by subsequent legislation. The Police Reform Act 2002 imposed additional responsibilities on partnerships over drug misuse; the Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003 did the same for anti-social behaviour; national plans and Public Service Agreements (to which partnerships were party) cut away local autonomy and prioritisation. Hughes (2007, p46) concludes:

“It would appear we are living, to paraphrase Mao Tse-tung, under conditions of ‘permanent revolution’ in the public services with an agenda driven largely by central government!”

To Hughes’ point must be added the Coalition government’s new policy of Police and Crime Commissioners (PCCs). The PCC role has reduced police authority power.

Previously, some police authority members were also councillors, linking the two leading authorities within the partnership. The PCC role creates ambiguity and uncertainty – while roles gradually emerge, there will be confusion about who represents the police; who can commit resources on what basis; how lines of accountability for partnership working operate; whether the PCC's priorities differ from the partnership strategy. Besides pragmatic issues of confusion and delay, the introduction of PCCs creates a 'competitor strategy'. Even if things go well, the public may be confused about who deserves credit – this is a live issue within partnerships and emerges strongly in the thesis research (see chapters Six, Seven and Eight).

The section outlines the concerns, up to the present day, of how the CDA has been enacted and adapted by the Blair/Brown government, and how the Coalition policies are beginning to influence community safety policy. The next section illustrates how these developments impact upon PSE and network governance.

### ***CDA, network governance and PSE***

The previous sections outlined how the CDA 1998 was introduced, and the intended and unintended consequences commentators believe have emerged. This section looks at the possible direct implications of the CDA 1998 for network governance and PSE.

A number of commentators suggest the introduction of CSPs represents a form of network governance. Johnston and Shearing (2003, in Gilling 2007) believe partnerships cannot function properly in any other way; involvement of community and local knowledge is intrinsic. Garland (2001, in Gilling 2007) agrees – the combination of expert and local involvement is implicit in how partnerships are structured and operate.

Hughes (2007), on the other hand, argues the community does not genuinely participate, for many reasons. These include hierarchical interference by central government; obstinate local agencies; a lack of structures that generate trust; and the underlying instability of partnerships.

Clarke (2002) suggests the problem lies with the very notion of ‘community’ – the difficulty of identifying who is representing whom; challenging notions of what is ‘legitimate’ or ‘what works’ in a particular context; local divisions and tensions, exacerbated by fighting for funds (Clarke 2004). Given this, argues Clarke, any structure dealing with a ‘community’ begins with many difficulties to overcome. It may be difficult to ascertain what the community is, what it wants, and how it can best be helped (Taylor 2003, in Sullivan *et al* 2006). This is worsened by public sector managers viewing ‘community’ as a management process, not an identifiable entity; Schofield suggests this is pragmatic, but creates conflict and difficulty.

Ultimately, some commentators believe that New Labour was naïve in believing communities can genuinely be identified, engaged, and involved in a process of change. Such optimism is fading, replaced by government belief that some aspects of community must be downplayed, subsumed, or adapted for policy to take root. Squires (2006) cites the narrowing focus from community safety and ‘quality of life issues’ into

tightly-drawn issues around crime figures; the diminished role of the public, moving from active participants to passive consultees and recipients of services.

The evidence in this chapter suggests that government's overt agenda of community-based partnership has not been fully implemented; it has been impeded by barriers that include centralisation, inertia, communication difficulties, entangled community boundaries, and other practical issues. However, partnerships have now operated for over a decade; perhaps some issues have been overcome or bypassed. Possibly, partnerships have become networks but only in some ways or contexts; some aspects of networks may exist in name only; the actual experience of those involved is somewhat different to theoretical notions of network governance. This study looks at the extent of these issues.

In terms of PSE, establishing CSPs offers a number of possibilities. Within CSPs public sector professionals are effectively bypassing community involvement and consultation, or paying it lip-service (Garland 2001). This implies a 'we know best' culture that prevails or endures. If so, professionals may see partnership as demonstrating PSE, while communities do not. Alternatively, centralised interference may be holding back PSE, requiring adherence to NPM values and processes (Taylor 2003, in Sullivan *et al* 2006). Perhaps, instead, partnerships are seen to adhere to central government wishes, but underneath follow local processes in the belief that this creates greater benefit.

CSPs are intended, according to legislation and guidance (Home Office 1998), to improve public services and the quality of life for citizens. In this respect, they would seem to support the public interest and PSE. CSP implementation, suggest commentators, has fallen prey to centralisation, NPM, bureaucracy and politics. This research looks at the reality of life in CSPs, and how it has impacted upon PSE.



## **CHAPTER FIVE - METHODOLOGY**

### **Introduction**

Chapters One, Two and Three have outlined the two main concepts in this research – public service ethos (PSE) and network governance. They have discussed the development of each concept within changing public policy. For both, a working definition (pages 34 and 67) has been distilled from elements within various commentaries: each is a composite definition. This chapter examines how theoretical considerations are turned into research by the methodology employed. It shows how the methodology was chosen, and why certain research methods were selected over others available.

The first section explains the ontology and methodological decisions in designing the research. The second section explains the selection of case study. The third section outlines why interviews were chosen to conduct the research.

In the fourth section, there is an explanation of the origins of Community Safety Partnerships (CSPs). This is relevant because some criteria for case study selection reference how CSPs are organised, and the governance of partnerships. The section also provides a context of CSP history.

The fifth section explains the selection criteria for the two case studies. It explains which criteria were used and why; which two CSPs were selected as case studies, and what they offer for the research.

The sixth section breaks down how interview questions were prepared, based on a series of dimensions distilled from theory and academic thinking. This is explained by two tables (one for PSE, one for network governance). The tables show how interview questions covered all the dimensions, and how the analysis of data will be organised. Further details of interview questions can be found in Appendix A.

The seventh section explains interviewees selection: the criteria for choice, and how this ensured that the research contributes to new understanding.

## **Ethical considerations**

The research followed De Montfort University's code of ethics for research throughout the programme, and was approved by the Ethics Committee for this purpose. Before each case study began, the written authorisation of the deputy Chief Executive/Director of Community Safety, as appropriate, was secured. The researcher abided by the university's code of ethics in all aspects of the research.

The main ethical consideration was anonymity of interviewee responses. Each interviewee was told, before interview, that all responses were confidential, and would not be made available to anyone outside the university. The only individuals to see the data (or hear recordings) have been the researcher and thesis supervisors.

To preserve anonymity when discussing responses in the thesis, a system of anonymising data was developed whereby interviewees are identifiable as a code number known only to the researcher. Thus, quotes are attributed using codes (e.g. D6, C9) and not the names of the individuals concerned.

## Section 1 - Methodology and Ontology

Previous chapters stated that this thesis looks at a previously unexplored area – the impact of network governance on PSE. It would be difficult to approach such research in a deductive way – there is no acknowledged theory combining these two factors or explaining how one influences the other. Because there is no such theory, there is no clearly-defined or acknowledged methodology to test it. The research can explore how much theoretical ideas appear to exist in practical circumstances. But it cannot look deductively at connections and influences between the two theories.

Instead a more naturalistic, inductive and exploratory approach has been taken. This acknowledges that, while existing network governance and PSE theory shapes the research and understanding evidence, other factors are also vital. The approach must acknowledge these other factors because CSPs do not exist in a vacuum: they are subject to influences on behaviour, outlook and priorities. If the methodology fails to acknowledge these influences it will over-simplify connections and possible causation.

For example, the study acknowledges the role of *context* - legislative changes since 1997 and their impact; differing governance structures; and underlying social backgrounds. Parameters of social background here include population (ethnic mixture, population size and density, rural/urban split), crime levels, co-location of services.

In particular, the role of regional government is a crucial contextual factor. The case study in Wales deals with a CSP reporting mainly to the Welsh Assembly Government (WAG) – this is very different to the English context. The research allows the role of situation to be explored: comparing and contrasting the impact of two differing forms of governance, as well as demographics and geography.

Further details on case study selection and background appear later in this chapter, and in Chapters Six and Seven.

The lack of existing theory and subsequent deductive methodology means this study is concerned with *inductive theorizing* – i.e. making sense of evidence once it is collected. Using inductive theorizing means there is a qualitative element to data; the study

concerns itself with participants' subjective understanding, and the reasons for that understanding. There is an emergent quality to the research design; semi-structured interviews are prepared, but the interviewer also uses prompts and notes for the response to develop organically. The interview design is deliberate, allowing the strongest issues to emerge from the interviewee's perspective. Such an approach also allows an interest in what is happening, not measurable outcomes (Denscombe 2003).

These considerations lead to a *qualitative* study. Corbin and Strauss (2008) argue that the most important element of qualitative research is the desire to go beyond what is known, into the realm of the participant. Qualitative studies place participants' views into a wider framework, which sets the context and allows analysis of that data in a way that is cognisant of time, place, and other contextual factors.

## **Section 2 – Use of case studies**

The previous section explained that the research is founded upon inductive theorizing, looking at qualitative data based around process and perception. Inductive reasoning, argues Gillham (2000), lends itself to case study research. It pursues evidence of underlying reasons and awareness of process, collecting qualitative data, and recognising the researcher is part of the process. Gillham explains that results are descriptive and inferential: i.e. the data are described, then meaning is ascribed during analysis. This process involves creating a ‘thick description’ of data before analysing and theorising. This process is inductive and iterative (i.e. moves back and forth between data and analysis).

Where theory regarding the interaction of network governance and PSE is not established, the iterative process aids inductive reasoning. To ensure the study design captured the necessary aspects of social research, the parameters set out by Shipman (1997) were used. Shipman (1997) identified several key attributes of interpretative social research:

- research in natural settings – research was conducted in the interviewee’s place of work, during normal office hours
- research is open-ended and flexible – interviews were semi-structured, but allowed flexibility in discussing issues and perceptions identified by interviewees
- focus on the meanings of those researched – research looked at meanings and conditions ascribed by the subjects, not pre-ordained by the researcher. The research is based around interviewee perception – there is no ‘right answer’ to questions
- data collection and theorizing go together – within semi-structured interviews, the research pursued potentially new avenues of thinking as they were raised by subjects. Interview logs made after each interview allowed the interview process to be refined over time, to allow incorporation of previously unanticipated issues

Overall, the research fits with Yin's (2009) definition of case study. It spotlights two instances (two case studies); it is an in-depth study focusing on relationships and processes; it takes place in a natural setting; and it uses multiple sources of data – different respondents are asked about the same situation, and so effectively offer triangulation with their respective responses.

In choosing case study, it was necessary to consider some of the drawbacks and limitations of the approach. Shipman (1997) highlights that case studies are not automatically representative of a larger group, and so cannot be relied upon for generalization. Gomm *et al* (2000) refine this point: case study is aimed primarily at greater understanding, without theoretical inference or empirical generalization. However, generalization and inference can still be attempted, being limited by the wider applicability of the case studies themselves (a point supported by Denscombe 2003).

Gomm *et al* (2000) also cite Mitchell (1994) in arguing that case studies can be a means of inference, but this inferential process is analytical and therefore different to inference from statistical analysis. This implies that inferences and generalizations are more intuitive; based around theoretical concepts and perceptions; not 'provable' in the same way as statistical significance.

The conclusion, however, suits the basis of the research. The research is assessing theoretical concepts that are by nature subjective and political. An approach providing inferences and generalizations reflects the nature of what is being studied, where it is being studied, the intended output, and how this might be used.

The section identified why case studies are appropriate for researching this topic, and how the research was designed to capitalise on the advantages of case study work. The next section looks at the choice of interviewing as the research method.

### Section 3 - Choice of interview as a research method

The previous section identified case studies as a suitable form of research for this study, collecting qualitative data in a naturalistic setting. The choice of research method is partly determined by the selection of case study. Interviewing is an established means of data collection in a case study setting. Yin (2009, p106):

“One of the most important sources of case study information is the interview...Overall, interviews are an essential source of case study evidence because most case studies are about human affairs or behavioural events.”

Denscombe (2003) notes a number of preconditions to using interviews as a research method. These include:

- *research requires detailed information* – the data required here involves detailed information on specific aspects of an individual’s work
- *information can reasonably be gathered from a small number of informants* – there are a limited number of people operating within this context in each case study; too small to use (e.g.) surveys
- *data is based on emotions, feelings and experiences* – the data reflects personal experience, and invites further questioning and probing, so requires an iterative technique
- *data is based on sensitive issues or privileged information* – much of the data would be personal, or politically sensitive in context

Yin (2009) cites several potential problems with interviews, which must be overcome by careful design and analysis. Yin’s concerns are outlined below, alongside the action taken to reduce their likelihood and/or impact:

- *bias due to poorly articulated questions* – questions were carefully worded to reflect dimensions of network governance and PSE, gleaned from academic studies.

- *response bias* – responses contain inherent biases, as they reflect personal views. Analysis of responses from several interviewees can reduce the impact of one interviewee. Deliberately interviewing respondents known to have conflicting views, or working for different organisations, allows a degree of triangulation
- *inaccuracies due to poor recall* – the interviewees were asked about perceptions and opinions, not specific facts, data or events; this limits the likelihood that poor recall would impact upon the data
- *reflexivity* – it was stated before interview that the interview was concerned with views and perceptions, with no ‘right’ or ‘best’ answer. Reassurances about confidentiality also offset the potential for reflexivity

It was felt necessary to have a degree of consistency from one interview to another: this aids analysis across organisations and between case studies, by providing a common framework and common terms. It also ensured the interview stayed ‘on track’. However, it could not be totally structured and linear; respondent’s views and experiences needed to be explained in their own terms. Semi-structured interviews balanced the need for consistency and boundaries, and a requirement for flexibility. Gillam (2000) calls semi-structured interviews:

“...the most important form of interviewing in case study research. Well done, it can be the richest single source of data.” (Gillam 2000, p65)

Semi-structured interview technique works best, Gillham argues, when relatively small numbers of people are interviewed, using open questions to elicit responses about potentially confidential or personal experiences which could not be obtained from (for example) a survey. These elements are present in this research.

Semi-structured interviews require a further key component: that the researcher is clear about the key issues to be addressed. The need for this clarity explains why the interview questions were distilled from theoretical analysis of network governance and PSE. This ensured the issues to be addressed were foremost during design of both interview questions, and prompts.



Finally, consideration was given to ‘internal generalizability’. This is (Huberman and Miles 2002) the tendency for social interaction within an interview to affect the interviewer’s subsequent analysis, leading to false inferences. As a buffer between interview and analysis, the interviewer kept an interview log, allowing reflective thought about the social interaction, setting, mood, and non-verbal communication. This log was reviewed when analysing interview responses.

Therefore the nature of the research - while drawing on existing theoretical perspectives - is undertaking an exploratory approach. It is a qualitative study, using inductive reasoning, based on the process of what is happening, and participants’ subjective view of what is happening and why. As such, it lends itself to a case study approach, using semi-structured interviews. The selection of the case studies, and their background, are outlined in the next sections.

## **Section 4 - Community Safety Partnerships (CSPs)**

The Crime and Disorder Partnerships in England and Wales were introduced in 1998, following the Crime and Disorder Act 1998. Some partnerships had been a pilot scheme prior to passing of the legislation, allowing more detailed government guidance for the introductory phase. Some county boundaries have changed since 1998 and some mergers have taken place: there are currently 370 partnerships in England and Wales (Home Office 2009). In England they were originally termed CDRPs (Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships), but are currently called CSPs (Community Safety Partnerships) in both England and Wales.

The partnerships consist of a number of public bodies, who have a statutory obligation to act as partner organisations within the structure. Local authorities and police forces were mandated to lead partnerships in the 1998 Act. Since 1998, further public bodies have been added – these agencies' role has moved from passive observer to legally-mandated active participants. Each partnership covers a geographical area covered by the relevant local authority/authorities. Not all the agencies concerned had co-terminous boundaries in 1998, either for the organisation or its relevant constituent parts. Various agencies have now re-aligned, to produce effective co-terminosity; partly due to central government pressure, partly local concerns about a lack of co-ordination.

Two crucial differences remain between England and Wales. Firstly, in Wales local authorities moved to a single-tier, or unitary authority, in 1996 (Local Government (Wales) Act 1994). This means that, below the level of the Welsh Assembly Government (WAG), local government in Wales consists of only one tier per county. Local authorities in England are a mixture; some are a unitary authority, others have a county council, city council and/or borough or district council. Depending on the location, there can be up to three different layers of local government operating within one county (Chapters Six and Seven explain local structures in greater detail).

Secondly, in Wales most public bodies report to the WAG (police, probation and criminal justice services report to the Home Office/Department of Justice). WAG does not have primary legislation powers, but does have responsibility for areas of public policy such as health, education, social services, and transport. Policing is still not a

devolved responsibility. WAG is responsible for the implementation of community safety, but has no jurisdiction over policing, probation, or criminal justice agencies. This is clearly relevant to the development of CSPs in Wales, and forms an important part of the analysis.

This section outlines the basic background of CSPs, and particular situation within Wales. The structures surrounding partnerships are not only important within the cases studies: they were also important in choosing the case studies themselves. The next section looks more closely at the criteria for choosing the two case studies.

## Section 5 - Selection of case studies

The previous section outlined the background of CSPs: their formation following legislation, and how they evolved into partnerships of co-terminous agencies. This section looks at the criteria for choosing which of the CSPs was to form a case study.

Denscombe (2003) suggests that selection of cases studies can be grouped around three main categories – suitability, pragmatism, or some kind of *fait accompli*. In terms of suitability, aspects included whether a case study was suitably typical, suitably atypical, or represented some extreme part of a spectrum. These criteria link back to notions of generalization. In terms of pragmatism, Denscombe (2003) recognises that practical issues such as access also play a part in selection.

It was decided that using two case studies would represent a suitable balance between scale, size, time and suitability. Because the study looked at network governance, the case studies needed to represent points on a spectrum of governance (see below). However, more than two case studies would become unwieldy; difficult for one individual to handle while still retaining the necessary depth and richness of data. One case study, however, would not adequately explore variance in governance structures, or provide comparison.

In terms of suitability, the study was looking for case studies that fitted somewhere near the extremes of the spectrum across a number of criteria. These criteria related to both the governance aspects of the study, and the context of the partnership. The case studies were an example of *theoretical sampling*; chosen for theoretical reasons that reflect, to some degree, polar extremes of the criteria under study. This reflects best practice identified by Huberman and Miles (2002, p13):

“Thus, the goal of theoretical sampling is to choose cases which are likely to replicate or extend the emergent theory.”

The governance context of the CSPs is important. A unitary authority area raises different aspects of accountability, responsibility and communication, compared to an area with three layers of local government. The governance will be less diffused; lines

of accountability simpler and more visible, the chain of command and responsibility shorter. When different layers of local government are involved in the partnership, the structure becomes more complex; individuals cannot commit resources they do not control, decision-making becomes more complicated and takes longer. For partnership agencies interacting with local government more individuals have to be consulted, involved and committed. But while Wales has a unitary authority set-up that might simplify governance, there is a complicating governance factor. WAG's responsibilities include CSPs, but do not include police forces – Welsh police forces still report to the Home Office. Research within a Welsh partnership will demonstrate the dichotomy between police accountability and that of other agencies.

England and Wales offers many governance structures within the principle of CSPs. Choosing a case study involves consideration of structures and implications. The main characteristics are:

- layers of local government: unitary authority, borough council, district council, city council, county council, or any combination of these
- co-terminosity: how closely other services align boundaries with the local authority. This usually means discrete units within a service
- government: reporting structures to central or regional government. Different agencies report to different government departments (in Wales to two different governments)

In selecting two CSPs, the examples chosen must reflect this range, but also allow a reasonable assumption of generalization. The two examples selected must be at either end of the spectrum of CSP structures: this allows a comparison of the full range of differences in governance, structure, control and accountability. This comparison gives an insight into how governance has affected PSE in each case study.

The criteria for selection also need to reflect context, and practical considerations. The overall rationale for case study selection is therefore:

- *governance structures* – to test the network governance context, one case study should involve regional government, one case study a centralised model. They

should also reflect differences in local government: one with a unitary authority only, the other a combination of county, city and borough/district authorities

- *divergent populations* – the nature of the population served significantly affects services: one case study should be a predominantly rural, sparse and relatively homogeneous population, the other a fairly urbanised population with significant levels of ethnic minorities
- *centralisation of services* – one case study should be a relatively loose affiliation of service providers, working more closely in ad-hoc circumstances; one case study should reflect a deliberate attempt to co-locate and integrate services
- *access* – the study will be unsuccessful if there is not access to interviewees and supporting documentation. Access to the CSP is a significant issue in selecting case studies

Access was seen as a vital component. An unsuccessful initial approach to a potential case study (with no pre-existing relationship) had stressed the crucial importance of access. Without a ready means of engaging with the partnership, other aspects such as sampling issues became moot. For a postgraduate student without a long history of academic relationships in the field, a means of access was a fundamental building block of case study selection.

Pragmatically, there were co-ordinating individuals within each case study who were already known to the researcher: prior relationships made access easier and quicker, and secured the co-operation of those involved more readily.

The two choices of case study reflect the four main criteria outlined above. Greater detail on the nature of each case study area is contained in the beginning of each case study chapter (Chapters Six and Seven). Outlined below is an assessment of how each case study lines up against the selection criteria.

The first case study choice is Carmarthenshire, in west Wales. Carmarthenshire is a unitary authority. It has co-terminous boundaries with internal structures of partner agencies. The majority of agencies report to WAG, but police and criminal justice are still accountable to London.

Carmarthenshire is a predominantly rural area, with a relatively homogenous resident population, and low numbers of visible ethnic minorities. Service delivery issues revolve around sparsity of population, and limited opportunities for economies of scale.

Services in Carmarthenshire partnership generally reside within agencies, rather than centralised under a partnership banner. Two staff are co-ordinators of services and decision-making infrastructure, but services themselves are not centralised. Access for this case study is enhanced by the researcher having previously worked in Carmarthenshire for Dyfed-Powys Police.

The second case study choice is Derby City. The governance structure is a city council; but within the county of Derbyshire are a county council and district councils. The police force (Derbyshire Police) has two command unit areas that, combined, are co-terminous with the city council area. Other services also have internal boundaries that align with the city council area.

Derby is an urban area, with a larger and more diverse population than Carmarthenshire, and relatively high numbers of visible ethnic minorities. Unlike Carmarthenshire, Derby has many people who commute into the area for work each day, but do not live there. Population density potentially provides opportunities for economies of scale in delivering services.

Partnership services in Derby are highly centralised. The partnership operates as a quasi-organisation, with some permanent staff and a large number of affiliated/seconded staff from partner agencies. The partnership is directly responsible for a number of service delivery areas, having assumed control of these from the various agencies. Access to Derby City CSP is enhanced by the researcher's friendship with a member of staff.

The selection of these case studies represents opposite ends of the spectrum for a number of criteria:

\* Carmarthenshire is a unitary authority with co-terminosity achieved relatively early after the CDA was enacted. Derby City operates within a three-tier structure of local government, with full co-terminosity occurring more recently.

\* Carmarthenshire has left services with the agencies concerned, and the partnership co-ordinating. Derby has centralised services, turning partnership into a hands-on quasi-organisation.

\* Carmarthenshire is a rural area with low levels of crime, a sparse and homogenous population and long travel times between centres. Derby is an urban area with a relatively large travel-to-work population, a dense population that is ethnically diverse. Travel times are short, and crime levels are higher than Carmarthenshire.

\* Carmarthenshire reports mainly to regional government in Cardiff, with some agencies still reporting to Westminster. Derby has all services reporting directly to London.

Not only do the choices represent an interesting and valid comparison, but they also ensure that conclusions drawn could be generalised across the range of CSPs in England and Wales. This is because most CSPs lie between the two extremes (on each criterion) of the case studies. This is so across a number of criteria including complexity of governance, demographic factors, and degree of co-terminosity.

The selection of case studies has followed classic research design (Yin 2009), by selecting on the basis of suitability; it allows a degree of generalisation. Caution must be exercised, to ensure such generalisations can be adequately evidenced.

These five sections have explained the decisions made in planning research. They have explained the rationale for using case studies in a qualitative, inductive study. They have shown the why semi-structured interviews are used to gain data, and demonstrated the selection process for the two case studies. The next two sections provide detail on the interview process and preparing semi-structured interviews.



## Section 6 - Preparing Interview Questions

The aim of conducting interviews is to establish data for analysis, to answer the research questions outlined previously. This means the two main concepts (PSE and network governance) had to be *operationalized*; i.e. turned from theoretical concepts into statements and explanations, used as the basis for interview questions.

There is not a clear and consistent definition of either PSE or network governance in literature, or across time. For example, part of PSE definition is the lack of a profit motive. For many years, this was seen in terms of deriving personal or organisational benefit (in financial terms) from services or decisions about them: it fitted with ideas of neutral and altruistic intent. However, the emergence of NPM and associated processes has changed these parameters. It could be argued that the PSE implication of profit motive exists more in a public servant's understanding of profit motive in others, and how it could be harnessed for the public interest. Understanding a private sector partner or contractor may lead to better contract terms, shortened project timeframes, or more competitive tendering process. Thus, the context around public services has changed the nature of profit motive within PSE, without removing profit motive as a factor.

Likewise, in network governance the terms of what constitutes a network has altered over time. It retains key elements such as alignment of interests and stakeholder involvement, but the logistics have altered. What if members never physically meet? Thirty years ago the affiliation would be too loose, membership too disparate, to operate quickly and effectively as one entity. Nowadays, technology allows individuals to operate as a network without being co-located. Membership remains emblematic to networks, but the logistics have changed.

These examples demonstrate how PSE and network governance are, to some extent, fluid and adaptable concepts that must fit the prevailing context: they do not allow a fixed definition. Instead, both definitions require components, whose exact make-up and impact changes over time.

Therefore the research has not taken one commentator's definition of either PSE or network governance. Instead, the research has trawled literature to produce a composite

– unique – definition of PSE and network governance, drawing on elements identified by commentators. These definitions are then operationalized by the interview questions.

The design of the interview questions needed to consider a number of overarching factors:

- A logical flow: putting interviewees at ease, keeping to relevant issues and concepts (to act as a ‘guided conversation – Yin 2003).
- To ascertain how much network governance was taking place within CSPs.
- To elicit responses that allowed a comparison between empirical evidence and theoretical characteristics of network governance.
- To identify respondents’ concept of PSE and whether it currently existed, to allow comparison with theoretical characteristics of PSE.
- To provide respondents’ views on PSE within partnership working; how they defined it, how relevant they felt it was/would be, and whether such an ethos was already ingrained or acquired through organisational culture.
- To establish how governance arrangements since 1997 had impacted upon the PSE of those working in the partnership.
- To test the depth of respondents’ belief in, or support of, PSE.

From the literature on network governance and PSE, a number of key elements (‘dimensions’) were created. These dimensions are working definitions of both PSE and network governance. For a dimension to be considered, it needed mention as a demonstrable element of PSE or network governance by at least two commentators. Often the element was acknowledged by many commentators, but defined slightly differently by each. Here, the research looked for the most relevant definition for the research question in terms of context and applicability. This meant some definitions were more relevant than others.

Between them, these dimensions include all the key elements that make up the concept (‘key’ being defined by commentators in the field).

### ***Explanation of Table A***

These dimensions then formed the basis of interview design. This ensured the interview questions directly addressed the aims of the research, and that each dimension was adequately covered during the interview. Interview questions overlapped: each interview question produced analysis of at least two dimensions.

The dimensions could be later collapsed into fewer categories ('discussion areas'), grouped around the overlap in themes they represent. The intention of this collapsing process was to allow coherent organisation of analysis; examining overlap, intended and unintended consequences, and perception. Using discussion headings for the final conclusions gives the analysis a framework and coherence.

Organising interview questions, analysis of data, and conclusions in this way, allows the reader to clearly see the linkage between:

- a) basic concepts and issues identified by commentators, through to
- b) design of interviews and analysis of the data, through to
- c) conclusions drawn.

The flow from theory, through interview design, through the organisation of analysis, to conclusions, demonstrates the coherence of the study from initial concepts to final conclusions.

Table A shows how this flow worked for network governance. The first column shows academic support for identifying a dimension [*indicative and not exhaustive*], which is labelled in the third column. The second column shows the interview question(s) relating to this dimension. The final column illustrates the discussion heading used in the analysis section. Below the table, these discussion headings are listed for further clarification.

**Table A – Network Governance**

Academic References	Interview Question	Dimension	Discussion Heading
Rhodes (1996), Hay & Wincott (1998), Pierre & Peters (2000), Goss (2002), Howlett (2002), Marsh & Smith (2002), Loffler (2004), Hendricks & Topps (2005), Damgaard (2006), Borzel (2011)	Q1, Q4	Governance - Agency vs Structure	Agency vs Structure
Rhodes (1996), Stoker (1998), Goss (2001), Lowndes & Sullivan (2004), Stoker (2004), Damgaard (2006), Entwistle et al (2007), Bevir (2011)	Q2	Governance - Autonomy	Separation from government
Rhodes (1996), Stoker (1998), Goss (2002), Howlett (2002), Bevir & Rhodes (2003), Loffler (2004), Lowndes & Sullivan (2004), Stoker (2004), Entwistle et al (2007), Kokx & van Kempen (2010), Stoker (2011)	Q2	Governance - Centralisation	Separation from government
Hendricks & Topps (2005), Munro et al (2008)	Q3	Governance - Innovation	Network dynamics
Rhodes (1996), Bevir & Rhodes (2003), Kooiman (2003)	Q1, Q4	Governance - Interdependence	Network dynamics
Rhodes (1996), Pierre & Peters (2000), Goss (2001), Newman (2001), Bevir & Rhodes (2003), Maesschalk (2003), McDonough (2006)	Q1, Q12	Governance - NPM structures	Governance and NPM
Pierre & Peters (2000), Evans (2001), Howlett (2002), Damgaard (2006), Entwistle et al (2007)	Q3	Governance - Openness	Network dynamics
Rhodes (1996), Gains (2004)	Q2, Q4	Governance - Resources	Network dynamics
Pierre & Peters (2000), Newman (2001), Goss (2002), Bevir & Rhodes (2003), Damgaard (2006)	Q2	Governance - Tiers of Government	Separation from government
Rhodes (1996), Kooiman (2003), Ansell & Gash (2008)	Q4, Q10	Governance – Trust	Separation from government

**Governance Discussion Areas:**

Agency versus structure

Separation from government

Network dynamics

Governance and NPM

### ***Explanation of Table B***

Table B follows the same format, for PSE. The dimension given in the third column stems from academic references [*indicative, not exhaustive*] supporting its identification. The interview question(s) relating to that dimension are in the second column (Sup = a supplementary or follow-up question), with dimensions collapsed into discussion headings shown in the fourth column. These discussion headings are reiterated below the table:

**Table B Public Service Ethos**

Academic References	Interview Question	Dimension	Discussion Heading
Pratchett & Wingfield (1996), Denhardt & Denhardt (2000), O'Toole (2006), Haqle (2007), Hill & Hupe (2007), Hupe & Hill (2007), Grimshaw et al (2008)	Q5	PSE - Accountability	Public interest
Audit Commission (2002), Becker & Conner (2005), Lewis & Frank (2002), McDonough (2006), Hoggett et al (2006), Stackman et al (2006), Buelens & Broek (2007), Park et al (2008), Christensen & Wright (2009)	Q6, Q8, Q9, Q11, Supp	PSE - Socializations vs self-sel	Impact of organisation
Lash (1978), Chapman (1993), Pratchett (1999), Audit Commission (2002), Becker & Conner (2005), Wright (2007)	Q8, Q9, Q10, Q11	PSE - Cultural-specific	Impact of organisation
Maesschalk (2003), Plant (2003), Lawton (2004), O'Toole (2006)	Q4, Q10	PSE - Degree of trust	Impact of governance
Farnham & Horton (1996), Cribb (1997), Plant (1997), Brereton & Temple (1999), Denhardt & Denhardt (2000), Audit Commission (2002), Boyne (2002), Stoke & Clegg (2002), Maesschalk (2003), Merali (2003), Lawton (2004), Plowden (2004), O'Toole (2006), Thompson (2006), Haqle (2007), Diefenbach (2009)	Q1, Q12	PSE - Impact of NPM processe	Impact of governance
Lipsky (1980), Maynard-Moody & Musheno (2000), Rainey & Bozeman (2000), Hill (2003), Nielsen (2006), Buelens & Broek (2007), Hill & Hupe (2007), Hupe & Hill (2007)	Q9	PSE - Impact of working level	Impact of organisation
Farnham & Horton (1996), Pratchett & Wingfield (1996), Audit Commission (2002), Boyne (2002), Grimshaw et al (2003), Hoggett et al (2006), Buelens & Broek (2007), Christensen & Wright (2009)	Q5, Q11, Q13	PSE - Loyalty	Impact of individual
Pratchett & Wingfield (1996), Moore (2000), Audit Commission (2002), Boyne (2002), Lewis & Frank (2002), Public Administration Committee (2002), McDonough (2006), Buelens & Broek (2007), Wright (2007), Park et al (2008), Christensen & Wright (2009), Kim & Vandenabeele (2009)	Q6, Q9, Supp	PSE - Motivation	Impact of individual
Brereton & Temple (1999), Hoggett (2006)	Q6, Q9, Q13	PSE - Outcomes/processes/tr	Impact of organisation
Rainey & Bozeman (2000), Audit Commission (2002), Boyne (2002), Lewis & Frank (2002), Lawton (2004), Hoggett et al (2006), McDonough (2006), Buelens & Broek (2007), Park et al (2008), Kim & Vandenabeele (2009)	Q6, Q9, Q11, Supp	PSE - Personal values	Impact of individual

Academic References	Interview Question	Dimension	Discussion Heading
Farnham & Horton (1996), Pratchett & Wingfield (1996), Cribb (1997), Denhardt & Denhardt (2000), Moore (2000), Goss (2001), Audit Commission (2002), Public Administration Committee (2002), Smith (2004), Hoggett (2006), McDonough (2006), O'Toole (2006), Thompson (2006), The Work Foundation (2006), Haqle (2007), DuGay (2008), Kim & Vandenabeele (2009)	Q5, Q7, Q11, Q13, Q15, Supp	PSE - Public interest	Public interest
Bogdanor (1994), Hunter (1998), Brereton & Temple (1999), Garston & Grey (2001), Public Administration Committee (2002), Grimshaw et al (2003), Plant (2003)	Supp	PSE - Role of commissioning/c	Impact of governance
Grimshaw et al (2003), Merali (2003), Buelens & Broek (2007)	Q8	PSE - Variance	Impact of organisation
Moore (2000), Audit Commission (2002), Lewis & Frank (2002), Plant (2003), Cooney (2004)	Supp	PSE - Voluntary sector	Ethos comparison
Laffin (1998), Brereton & Temple (1999), Audit Commission (2002), Public Administration Committee (2002), Christensen & Wright (2009)	Q5, Q14	PSE - vs Public sector ethos	Ethos comparison
Denhardt & Denhardt (2000), Shacar (2000), Hoggett (2006), Haqle (2007), DuGay (2008), Diefenbach (2009)	Q5, Q7, Q11, Q13, Q15, Supp	PSE - Wider and longer thinking	Public interest
<b>PSE Discussion Areas:</b>			
Public Interest			
Impact of governance			
Impact of organisation			
Impact of individual			
Ethos comparison			

*These two tables demonstrate how the study in this thesis has been planned. As such, they are crucial to understanding the basis of the research, and the subsequent evidence and analysis. The process seeks to draw ‘golden threads’ from theory to conclusions:*

- *the theory and existing literature identify the key and salient areas of PSE and network governance*
- *these are then organised into dimensions, to ensure the full gamut of each concept is included in interviews*
- *interview questions are then created and organised to ensure each interview question covers at least two dimensions, and each dimension is fully covered*
- *the subsequent data is then organised according to these dimensions, for analysis*
- *after analysing each dimension in turn, the dimensions are collapsed into discussion areas, allowing exploration of overlapping themes and possible linkages across dimensions*

*In this way, theory shapes the research, which can then feed into existing theory when discussing the resultant evidence.*

This section demonstrated how interview questions were developed: academic references drove the development of dimensions that form the basis of definitions of PSE and network governance. It explained how these dimensions shaped the interview questions, and how dimensions are collapsed into wider ‘discussion headings’ for deeper and cross-cutting analysis. The tables demonstrated this process visually.

The interview questions themselves can be viewed in Appendix A. The next section looks at the criteria for selecting interviewees.



## **Section 7 - Choice of interviewees**

The previous section outlined how the interview questions stemmed from academic theory, and how they were integrated with the organisation of analysed data. The next step was to decide who should be interviewed.

Holstein and Gubrium (1995) point out that sampling for interview is different to sampling for surveys. They suggest interview sampling is (p74):

“...tentative, provisional, and sometimes even spontaneous.”

Holstein and Gubrium (1995) emphasise the key ingredients of flexibility, and revealing particular sets of meaning; this may mean cutting across pre-existing boundaries such as strata or categories within organisations. They stress that samples build partly by discovery during the interview process, and conclude that (p74):

“The idea is not so much to capture a representative sample of the population as it is to continuously solicit and analyse representative horizons of meaning.”

The aim of this research is not to look solely at high-level strategic management. This tier has been covered in other studies (such as Merali 2003). The aim is to look largely at the experiences and perceptions of those delivering services – what Lipsky (1980) termed ‘street level bureaucrats’. This means that, while responsible for delivering services, they also retain some autonomy and choice in the manner, means, and timing of delivering services. The majority of interviewees should fall under this heading, but not all of them: to fully understand the nature and impact of organisational (and supra-organisational) factors, some managerial staff would be interviewed. Managers provided a context and alternative view that would make for richer understanding and deeper analysis; providing background information and a wider perspective.

Looking at the structure of Carmarthenshire CSP in 2009, there are three tiers within the partnership:

- \* At the strategic level, a Service Delivery Board
- \* Below this five 'Action Groups'; each responsible for delivering one strand of the overall strategy
- \* Below this, Action Group members responsible for direct service delivery.

It was decided to interview mainly 'street level bureaucrats' but also some managerial staff: each head of an Action Group, and members of that Action Group. This gave a chance to compare experiences throughout the hierarchy, and ensure data from each aspect of the partnership's responsibilities. In addition, two co-ordinators within police and local authority would be interviewed to provide a broader view than simply one strand of the strategy, and an overall perspective on the partnership.

In Derby City, the partnership has grown into a mainly co-located quasi-organisation. In 2009 there were:

- \* a director,
- \* senior management tier of five heads of service
- \* managers heading units of varying size
- \* staff providing support to the whole unit, (e.g. HR, finance, and data analysis)

A range of interviewees from across function, service area, and seniority within the partnership were selected (see Appendix B). The majority of these were 'street level bureaucrats' – i.e. working daily with service users.

Each of the five directors was interviewed. At least two further staff from each unit was interviewed. In addition, several support individuals were interviewed, to provide a cross-cutting experience beyond individual organisation or unit.

Overall, from each case study the spread of interviewees was similar:

- the head of each main unit or action group
- at least two staff from each unit or action group, responsible for delivery or commissioned delivery of partnership services

- several other staff with a multi-unit or cross-cutting responsibility at delivery level

These selections moved the study away from previous studies focusing on senior management alone. Here the direct service experiences were included, but in context. This allowed the study to look at how higher concepts such as PSE and network governance had directly affected those delivering services, rather than how management *believed them* to have affected services. However, it also includes some aspects of both network governance and PSE observable by more senior staff. Those staff operating across the partnership (in a co-ordinating or supporting role) could provide a view that cut across existing organisational boundaries.

Although the partnerships in the two case studies were different in the way they organise, the two sets of interviewees contained commonalities. These were:

- majority representation by staff at the ‘front end’ of service delivery
- each strand of the partnership’s work and/or strategic aims covered
- some interviewing of more senior and strategic staff
- interviewing of staff who could provide a cross-cutting and/or historical perspective on the partnership

This section explains the criteria for interviewee selection. It shows how the partnership’s organisational structure was utilised, but that cross-cutting views were sought when available. It also demonstrates how most interviewees were staff directly responsible for service delivery.

## **Conclusion**

The chapter has summarised the research design. It began by explaining how PSE and network governance were emerging and evolving theories, not considered in conjunction before. This required an inductive not deductive approach, dictating methodology and research design. The study would need to be qualitative to fit this inductive approach.

The chapter then explained why case studies were appropriate: the richness of the data, the iterative approach to analysis and questioning, and focus on the meanings ascribed by staff. This section concluded that case studies represented a suitable approach.

The chapter also demonstrated the suitability of interviews for of data-gathering. In particular, interviews gather rich data about subjective experiences, and the individual's assessment of significance. For consistency, and to aid analysis, semi-structured interviews were selected.

The basic context of Community Safety Partnerships (CSPs) in England and Wales was explained. This provided background and baseline information, and began to explain the selection of case studies.

After this, the chapter focused on case study selection. It explained the basic parameters of selection such as applicability; case studies exemplifying a wider population; pragmatism and access. It then explained in detail the choice of the two case studies – using criteria such as governance structure, demographics, and partnership structure – linking this to the context of each CSP.

What has also been demonstrated are the links between academic theory, interview questions, and subsequent analysis, and how definitions of both PSE and network governance varied across commentators and time. The definitions used – and the 'dimensions' that emerged – were composites developed uniquely for this study. The dimensions formed the basis of interview questions, and could be later collapsed into broader 'discussion areas' for analysis across and between dimensions.

The choice of interviewees was based on those with direct service delivery responsibility. These were supplemented by interviews with those at managerial level, to provide context and a wider perspective.

The next two chapters explore the data obtained in each case study.

## **CHAPTER SIX - CARMARTHENSHIRE CASE STUDY**

### **Introduction to the partnership**

This section sets out the background to the Carmarthenshire partnership, as it relates to the research. Carmarthenshire is a geographically large but sparsely populated county (by UK standards). It occupies an area of south-west Wales, between Swansea and the county of Pembrokeshire, extending up into the agricultural regions of mid-Wales. It covers an area of 2,400sq km and has a population of 180,000 (mid-2010 estimate). Of these, only 0.6% is from an ethnic minority. According to the 2001 census, 39% of the population can read and write in Welsh, though 64% can understand the language (Carmarthenshire County Council 2012).

The area is predominantly rural and the economy based on agriculture and service industries. Carmarthenshire has only a few miles of motorway, and borders mainly rural counties, with the exception of Swansea to the south-east (Carmarthenshire County Council 2012). It has traditionally been associated with some of the lowest crime rates in the UK, and one of the highest detection rates for recorded crime (Home Office 2012).

The first case study concerns Carmarthenshire Community Safety Partnership (CSP).

Carmarthenshire has been selected as a case study because it represents one end of a number of key spectrums (see Chapter Five). In doing so it provides a sharp contrast to Derby City Council: the differences represent key areas for analysing both governance and PSE issues.

Carmarthenshire has a governance structure that encompasses both a unitary authority and a regional government (the Welsh Assembly Government); Derby City has three tiers of local government and a national government in London. Carmarthenshire has a relatively loose CSP structure with little co-location of services and the continuation of discrete boundaries between public agencies; Derby City is strongly co-located, with the partnership operating as a quasi-organisation. Carmarthenshire has a small and sparse population that is relatively homogenous, and below-average crime levels

compared to England and Wales; Derby City has an urban population with above-average crime levels, and above-average levels of ethnic diversity. Carmarthenshire has an additional factor influencing governance: police and criminal justice agencies are responsible to government in London, while other agencies report to the WAG in Cardiff; in Derby City all agencies report to central bodies in London.

Like all CSPs, the initial driver for the Carmarthenshire partnership was the impending legislation from the new Labour government in 1997, which subsequently became the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 (Home Office 2010). This Act laid out the framework that guided local services towards the creation of partnerships.

In Carmarthenshire, preparations for the 1998 Act saw the creation of a senior strategic board, involving Chief Executive of Local Authority/Chief Constable level, with a tier below for implementation (Dyfed-Powys Police 2009). In these early days, the main drivers of the partnership were the police and local authority, who were the largest organisations with a statutory responsibility for the partnership. Subsequently, this statutory role has been extended to the Fire Service (partially in 2000 and then by the Fire Service Act 2004), and NHS/Primary Care Trusts in 2010 (Carmarthenshire County Council 2010).

An issue in every CSP is co-terminosity of agencies' boundaries: the degree to which organisational boundaries line up. A unitary authority had been established in 1996 (Carmarthenshire County Council 2010). Subsequent changes in other agencies took longer to achieve – for example, police BCUs (Basic Command Units) came into line with county boundaries in 2000 (Dyfed-Powys Police 2009). At the time of the research interviews (2009-10) all agencies had overall or internal boundaries co-terminous with the county boundary.

The Carmarthenshire situation was (and remains) complicated by the partial involvement of the Welsh Assembly Government (WAG), which had been established following a 1999 referendum. In particular, the agencies reporting to the Home Office/Department of Justice (mainly police, probation, justice services) continue to do so; all other agencies report to the WAG. This 'two masters' situation covers the full range of partnership issues - from priority-setting and performance targets, through

management and accountability of resources, to audit and inspection. Most policies are part-funded by WAG (with their own funding mechanisms and targets), but many also include some financial assistance from Westminster (Carmarthenshire County Council 2010). By contrast, in Derby City funding streams, management, priorities and accountability run through the same governance structure for all agencies – straight to/from central government, with no intervening level.

WAG has developed three main policy strands it wishes to integrate – community safety sits alongside ‘children and young people’ and ‘health and wellbeing’ in this regard (Welsh Assembly Government 2010). These priorities affect cross-cutting policy and funding decisions. Performance targets are a combination of local WAG-set targets, and WAG re-interpretation of Home Office targets (Carmarthenshire County Council 2010). Agencies report to WAG via a Regional Crime Director; some agencies (police, probation) also still report to the Home Office or Department of Justice. Audit and inspection of the partnership is partly carried out by the Auditor-General Wales, but each agency is also inspected by their own audit regime (including - for policing - HMIC from London, not Cardiff).

For the partnership there are practical difficulties in setting local priorities, identifying resources, and carrying out services. For example, the Home Office may issue a ‘national’ drugs strategy; all too often this will be based around the needs of England, with small sections dealing with Wales. However, the police and criminal justice agencies in Carmarthenshire will not be able to simply take this strategy and begin applying it. Many of the services require multi-agency co-operation with services such as health or social services. Some may require multi-agency funding. These agencies will wait on the WAG drug strategy; that strategy may target slightly different priorities, or advocate different solutions, because the problems are different to those identified by the strategy from Westminster.

Agencies in Carmarthenshire must therefore deal with delays in official guidance and strategy; then must negotiate a minefield of two different sets of regulation, funding criteria and measures of performance. Finally, they will be accountable to different audit and inspection regimes, even though they have been co-operating locally.



Westminster and WAG have identified this as a problem, but key issues prevent a full resolution. For example, the electoral cycles between Cardiff and Westminster differ (three years versus five years); in recent years there have been party political differences between Cardiff and Westminster. Aligning governance is difficult because of these differences, and because of the overt intent of WAG to be demonstrably different in policy terms from Westminster.

The current Community Safety Plan (2008-11) was a three-year strategy that is updated annually. Its priorities reflected a combination of WAG/Home Office targets, and local consultation (Carmarthenshire has instigated a multi-agency Citizen Panel for this). The Plan demonstrates a structure of a senior Strategic Service Delivery Board for overall guidance. Below this sit five Action Groups, each responsible for a strand of delivery. The five Action Groups at present are:

- \* Violent and Alcohol-related Crime
- \* Anti-social Behaviour/Criminal Damage
- \* Vehicle Crime
- \* Burglary
- \* Road Safety

In the case study, members of each of these five groups were interviewed (the selection of interviewees is described in Chapter Five). This ensured that all the activities undertaken by the partnership was covered by the interviews.

The next section sets out the structure of the chapter.

## **Structure of the Chapter**

The chapter analyses the responses of interviewees from across the spectrum of the Carmarthenshire CSP. Interviewees covered a range of functions, levels of responsibility, agencies and accountabilities (see Appendix B).

Each case study is an analysis of the nature of network governance within a CSP, and its impact on the prevailing PSE. This chapter conducts this analysis for the Carmarthenshire CSP. It uses 16 interviews of staff within the CSP, covering a range of functions, agencies, responsibilities, reporting mechanisms, levels of seniority and experience. The interviews have been anonymised to avoid individual identification. However, for ease of use they are identified here by a letter and number: i.e. C4 refers to the fourth person interviewed in Carmarthenshire. This allows the reader to see patterns in respondents, without naming individual interviewees.

These are semi-structured interviews, where each question is based on the ‘dimensions’ of network governance and PSE identified from the academic literature (see chapters Two, Three and Five). Structuring the interviews in this way allows the subsequent analysis of the data to also be rooted in the dimensions: this is important because it allows the analysis to be systematically organised and assessed. It also demonstrates a chain linking the academic theory, to the interviews conducted, to the analysis of the data.

Ensuring such linkage is a key element of the research design: the interviews are not simply a chance for CSP staff to talk about their work. Instead, it is a focused interview that ensures all aspects of PSE and network governance are covered in the interview. The interview questions, the choice of case study as an approach, and the choice of the case studies themselves: all this has been deliberately arranged to integrate direct public service experience with the theoretical tenets of both network governance and PSE. The subsequent analysis of the interview data follows the same pathway, for the same reasons.

While the interviews were semi-structured in this way, they were also iterative: the interviewer was able to follow up ideas and views with supplementary questions, pose

hypotheticals, and react to responses. This provided a rich and deep set of data. Such richness was one of the reasons why interviewing was preferred as a research method to, for example, surveys.

The chapter will look at the direct experience of practitioners developing and producing services for the CSP. The interviews asked respondents about their direct experience, but also asked them to consider the context (in time, geography and governance) in which this experience occurs. Because the interview questions (and the dimensions on which they are based) are identical in both case studies, direct comparison can be made between the two sets of data. This allows inference about the impact of underlying governance factors, as well as assessing the degree of difference/similarity in the PSE displayed within each case study.

The chapter has been organised to use the dimensions of network governance and PSE outlined in chapters 2 and 3. Each dimension is considered in turn, with an analysis of what was said by the interviewee, and how this can be assessed in terms of PSE and network governance within Carmarthenshire. This will build up into an analysis of data across all 26 dimensions. These dimensions are grouped into 9 discussion areas; a set of conclusions are drawn at the end of each discussion area.

For ease of navigation, the dimensions relating to network governance are considered first, followed by the dimensions for PSE (however, the implications for both network governance and PSE are considered in every dimension). At the beginning of each dimension, there is a definition of that dimension and a graphic to show where that dimension fits into the overall structure.

Some of the dimensions yielded richer data than others. This is in the nature of the subject at hand, and the subjective interpretation of interviewees. As a result, this study presents the relevant and important data and its implications – some sections may therefore be longer than others.

Direct comparison between Carmarthenshire and Derby City is not included at this point: it comes in Chapter Eight. This is so that the reader can absorb the analysis of the dimensions for each case study, before the assessment of factors across the case studies

is considered. These two case study chapters provide the rich, deep and contextually aligned research evidence from which to draw conclusions about the PSE and network governance.

## Network Governance: Discussion Area 1 Agency vs structure

<i>Discussion heading</i>	<i>Dimension</i>
Agency vs structure	Agency vs structure
Separation from government	Autonomy Centralisation Tiers of government Trust
Network dynamics	Innovation Interdependence Openness Resources
Governance and NPM	Governance and NPM

**Dimension 1 agency versus structure:** *Network governance is a combination of agency and structure, and the interplay between them. Network governance reflects the nature and dynamics of the relationship between the role of the individual, and the structures within which they operate.*

Within network governance theory, there is a significant debate around the relative importance of structure (how the network is established, and what processes and systems are put in place) and agency (the importance of individuals, as relationship-builders and developers of the network) (Pierre & Peters 2000, Howlett 2002, Damgaard 2006). The CSP is deliberately designed by government, as a way of using networks to control the implementation of community safety policy (DETR, 1998). As such government has, to a degree, dictated the structures used for the partnership. Dimension 1 seeks to establish to what degree the CSP is driven by those structures, and to what degree it is influenced by personal relationships and personalities.

In regard to these issues the interviewees were very revealing, and the findings of the research indicated that firstly, the structures of the partnership merely formalised existing relationships, which would largely have continued without those structures being applied. As such, the CSP merely formalises existing pathways, and doesn't change the priorities. It was strongly asserted that partnership structures formalised existing relationships and priorities:

“Hasn't changed my working practices...I was working with all those partners before the partnership was created” (C7)

“If the partnership wasn't there I would still be working with the same people...I would be able to get the same from them if there was no partnership.” (C8)

“There is no guidance, really, from the Assembly in terms of how you should establish your partnership structure, so it's not dictated at all, and they do vary” (C9)

These comments imply that structure does not make a significant difference; that individuals and therefore agency has a stronger role in shaping the partnership.

Second, there is an element of 'gestalt' about the partnership structures – they allow a greater capacity/new options/stronger response to problems, albeit that those problems were previously known. The structure, therefore, allows a different response and so impacts upon delivery and, to a lesser extent, processes. Structure increases capacity through better access to specialists or key resources, allowing action that could not be taken by one agency.

Third, the structures allow access to funding mechanisms not available to individual agencies. Sometimes this is deliberately organised in this manner by the government (to push agencies towards co-operation). The same structures can also allow new ideas to be fed into a structure without political baggage or rivalry. For example, two new road safety initiatives taken on by the overarching structure of the All-Wales Road Safety Group, that would have been ignored otherwise – the structure took the politics out of the decision, and reduced a sense of 'not invented here' hindering the take-up of

ideas. This suggests structure can influence by de-personalising inter-relationships between agencies, removing politics from certain decisions.

Fourth, personality and personal relationships are, despite the existence of formal structures, the key to getting things done. No respondents identified structures as being pre-eminent over personal relationships:

“partnership working depends on individuals, the success of partnership working tends to depend on the individuals, at both an operational and a strategic level...It’s a case of having people in key positions that see that, by working together, we can get far better information, which can then mean better-targeted resources to solve those issues... The culture of the main partners is very similar, but that is down to personalities driving from the top... you can’t just set it up, get the right structures in place, and leave it.” (C9)

The implication is that structure alone will not achieve anything: it can aid personal relationships or hinder them, but agency will be the pre-eminent factor in dictating success.

There was broad agreement that agency (i.e. individual relationships/personalities) was a more significant factor than structure and this was felt to be true both in senior positions - where the key relationships helped to shape direction and momentum - and at ‘ground level’.

Overall, while some felt that the structure cemented existing relationships, others believed that the structure was intrinsic to partnership development in two ways. First, allowing access to funding streams and support mechanisms unavailable to individual agencies. Funding was deliberately directed by the Assembly towards co-operation both in preparing funding bids, and carrying out programmes. Agencies were monitored and audited to ensure that co-operation continued. Also the expertise of individuals and agencies (and their contacts list) enabled access that would otherwise have been unlikely.

The second change was a perceived form of ‘gestalt’ taking place – i.e. the whole is greater than the sum of its parts; and provides opportunities and potential denied to the individual parts. Here greater capacity, increased knowledge base, and access to specialists or resources - not possible in isolation - gave the partnership a capacity (in terms of planning, response and delivery) beyond the individual partners.

The next section begins looking at the discussion area of separation from government, and the extent to which the CSP represents a network with genuine trust and devolved authority from government.



## Network Governance: Discussion Area 2 Separation from government

<i>Discussion heading</i>	<i>Dimension</i>
Agency vs structure	Agency vs structure
<b>Separation from government</b>	<b>Autonomy</b> <b>Centralisation</b> <b>Tiers of government</b> <b>Trust</b>
Network dynamics	Innovation Interdependence Openness Resources
Governance and NPM	Governance and NPM

***Dimension 2 autonomy: Network governance demonstrates a high degree of autonomy from government in setting and enacting policy.***

Autonomy is the extent to which the network, once created, is left by government to carry out much of its activity by itself (Damgaard 2006). Where there remains strong steering from government, the arrangements might be seen as simply replacing a formal hierarchy with a more subtle one. A true network should be, to a great degree, self-sustaining, self-governing, and identifying its own priorities and solutions (Rhodes 1996, Lowndes & Sullivan 2004, Stoker 2004).

There are two key aspects for this dimension. First, government at WAG (Welsh Assembly Government) or Westminster level, still exerts a strong influence on priorities, targets and resources; diluting the autonomy of the CSP. A number of respondents believed upper tiers of government impinged on their ability to self-govern:

“There is always tension as to, a) where is the money coming from, b) what it can be used for, and c) where it can be used” (C4)

In some cases, government pursued cross-boundary issues in prioritising or strategy, attaching ‘strings’ to funding effectively dictated strategic direction and priorities, without overtly appearing to do so. However, some felt national priorities were so high-level that it did not affect their field’s ability to deal with local priorities.

Second, there was the specific role of the police in Wales. The police under the Home Office; CSPs and partner organisations within the remit of WAG; caused difficulties:

“...sometimes I feel that we’re on different wavelengths, with our priorities and their [WAG] priorities...we’re just a bolt-on” (C3)

“In practice it is still difficult to make sure that the Home Office are aware that things are different within Wales.” (C4)

Problems included conflicting priorities, delays in strategic guidance, mismatched funding streams, and two sets of performance targets and measurement regimes. Home Office policy and guidance frequently cut across other government departments in WAG: dealing with this problem seemed a low priority for officials. The implication is either that central government considered it unimportant, or that it views the CSP as a ‘delivery arm’ of itself, and therefore changes are unnecessary. On the ground, this manifested in delayed policy, confused delivery, and blurred accountability.

While Carmarthenshire felt that the Assembly was generally a consensual body, there were two caveats.

First, the Assembly controlled resources, and directed funding towards specific partnership-based programmes, to influence strategic direction and operational implementation. WAG limited the autonomy of the CSP by directing work (or funding) down particular policy avenues, whether or not they coincided with a partnership’s locally-agreed priorities.

Second, in Carmarthenshire the police, probation and youth justice services still come under the auspices of the Home Office in Westminster (and, latterly, Department of Justice). Other services are under the control of the Assembly. This 'dual master' syndrome created practical problems. It also highlighted philosophical differences between Cardiff and Westminster: the latter more likely to control from the centre, and place more stringent performance management and inspection requirements. Agencies under Westminster felt less autonomous than those led by the Assembly. This speaks to the crucial role of government attitude - local autonomy is in the gift of government department, not an automatic 'right' simply because the partnership exists.

Alongside the question of autonomy, is the degree of centralisation of power, authority, finance and resources, which is considered in the next section.

***Dimension 3 centralisation: Network governance demonstrates a clear departure from governance arrangements that reflect hierarchical control from a central government.***

This dimension is closely linked to the previous dimension: both examine the extent to which the CSP is free to develop policy, processes and priorities by itself, reflecting the network's position as understanding and responding to local conditions. Both dimensions reflect the history of governance as well as the present (Goss 2002, Howlett 2002, Entwistle et al 2007). If much is still being disseminated from the centre, it could be argued that the CSP is not a network in a conventional sense, but a vessel for transmitting hierarchical control (Damgaard 2006). If too much is centralised, the partnership will not operate as a form of network governance, but simply as an alternative means of hierarchy.

Some felt that national targets and priorities identified by government were too high-level and strategic to be interference – they still allowed local variation and response. Others believed government control was becoming looser and longer-term in outlook:

“There is rivalry [between agencies]...very very possessive over their own ideas...part of the problem is maybe [that] they are given a lot of money now...and it’s not ring-fenced” (C8)

“it is bottom-up meeting top down; whereas before it was all top-down.” (C4)

The majority saw government still exercising considerable control; deciding priorities, and setting targets centrally. Local autonomy was diluted and so CSPs were administering central wishes., and this was particularly true of the Home Office, as opposed to WAG:

[Centrally-decided Public Service Agreements] “...those influence everything” (C4)

Respondents cited examples of national targets being simply numerically reduced to CSP-sized portions; or national programmes such as PREVENT being a requirement regardless of local conditions.

Central control was largely being exercised via funding streams; overt requirements on policy and strategy were fading. Instead, restricted access to (and use of) funding steered priorities and often processes. The focus of these streams was often on proving process, not outcomes.

Overall, the majority felt local targets were the regionalisation of national targets, rather than reflecting local concerns, though this central grip had loosened in recent years. The Home Office was a deeper example to this trend, driving central priorities to local levels. Both network governance and PSE are undermined. For network governance, it makes the network a deliverer of priorities decided without considering local circumstance: the opposite of classic network governance theory. For PSE, it reflects a lack of trust in local service providers, and a lack of faith that they can develop suitable local targets to provide community benefit: instead, they must be imposed to be effective.

The degree of central control varies among government departments, suggesting that change has taken root in some places and not others. In Wales, following the devolution of powers there seems a more ‘hands-off’ and steering-type approach compared to Westminster (and, especially, Home Office).

Centralisation shows signs of evolution. Interviewees cite a shift from overt central control through ‘command’ processes, to more subtle means. This means a move away from pronouncements, detailed guidance, and policy that includes process and principle. Instead are more covert forms of control: bidding for funding that direct agencies towards certain priorities, or ‘retrospective control’ by using audit and inspection to criticise those not following the nationally-prescribed path. Audit and inspection can be effective by damaging agencies’ public image, access to future funding streams, or even survival. For example, police forces have recently been subject to proposals about full-scale amalgamation, partly on the basis of audit and HMIC inspection data about their efficiency.

Not all respondents saw central control the same way. This may reflect differences between government departments (or between Westminster and Cardiff). It may also reflect whether a respondent is aware of how much their local work is dictated centrally and how much is driven locally.

The devolved government in Cardiff provides a further tier of government for some agencies, and the question of how the ‘layering’ of government levels affects the partnership is considered in the next section

***Dimension 9 tiers of government: Network governance is impacted upon by the extent, nature and impact of government structures and layers.***

Part of the aim of the fundamental research question set out in the introduction and Chapter Five, which led directly to the choice of case studies, is to look at the impact of different layers of government. Does having a regional government, with devolved powers, create a different network than one overseen by a national and centralised government? Does devolved government give a network more autonomy, or less (Pierre & Peters 2000, Newman 2001, Bevir & Rhodes 2003)? Does WAG have a different

approach than Westminster to setting objectives, allocating resources, or audit and inspection?

Some felt WAG was not prescriptive, and more *laissez-faire* in their approach to the CSP; others found it longer term in its thinking (and more consensual) than dealing with Westminster:

“they [London] don’t care about the long term, which is one reason why the Welsh Assembly Government holds out a better hope for us” (C4)

Not everyone agreed: *laissez-faire* possibly related more to professional standards of staff, than strategic issues - i.e. WAG was slow to criticise performance and took a longer perspective, but still had prescriptive ideas about priorities and targets.

The split between Home Office/WAG for certain policing functions was a significant problem for in funding, audit and inspection, strategic planning and performance management:

“In practice it is still difficult to make sure that the Home Office are aware that things are different within Wales.” (C4)

Assimilating the CSP with existing or recent organisational structures was also difficult. Problems remained in overlap with other networks, and how scrutiny and accountability was to be divided.

Philosophical differences between Westminster and Cardiff were emphasised in the problem of ‘two masters’ in Carmarthenshire. The Assembly was seen as less prescriptive and more consensual; possibly due to being a coalition government where consensus needed to be reached. Alternatively, the Assembly need only have one half of a political argument – what to spend on – rather than a full debate, because funding levels were still set in London.

For the PSE, this implies that WAG is more prepared to accept and encourage a PSE, by trusting local public servants. By contrast, the Home Office’s centralising tendencies

seem like a lack of trust, or belief in ‘common ground’ of the public interest. WAG also appeared more interested in the kind of longer-term thinking that is part of PSE, whereas Westminster seemed more focused on shorter-term thinking, demonstrable performance and narrow targets.

These three sections have focused on the degree of control exercised by government on the partnership. The next section completes the view of government-network relations, by assessing the degree of trust around the partnership’s operations.

***Dimension 10 trust: Network governance demonstrates a high degree of trust between network members, and trust of the network by government. Network governance reflects the extent to which work operates on trust between network members, rather than contracts, SLAs, etc.***

One criteria of network governance is interdependence and trust among the members of the network (Rhodes 1996, Ansell & Gash 2008). Trust is preferred to memoranda of understanding, contracts, or other formal means of ensuring co-operation and agreeing standards: the theory is that formalisation creates a ‘work to order’ mentality that inhibits co-operation. Trust emphasises the informal and the consensual. In network governance, member partners should have developed trusting working relationships (Kooiman 2003); the degree of trust therefore indicates the extent to which network governance is embedded as the governance system.

Co-operation and communication between CSP members is clearly a key factor in understanding how trust is developed and maintained. What such communication avoided was a phantom partnership, or:

“partnership by e-mail” (C1)

Respondents discussed the free flow of information; the appreciation of others’ circumstances; or simply the personality of the individuals concerned (especially at senior level):

“There is still the issue where you have stronger characters...” (C8)

“Partnership working depends on individuals, the success of partnership working tends to depend on the individuals, at both an operational and a strategic level.” (C9)

Co-location also emerged as a key factor in limiting the influence of a ‘not invented here’ syndrome, and politics created by previous circumstances. Old rivalries within Carmarthenshire before unitary status in 1996 still held some sway: co-location broke down barriers from this pre-unitary existence. Some felt that contract (for example, commissioning services) was still the predominant way of managing relationships.

Overall, Carmarthenshire presented a mixed picture. On the one hand, some felt that trust was gradually increasing within the partnership, as the partnership itself matured: a greater degree of co-operation, and relaxing of the fear that success by one agency (or the partnership) would come at the price of their own agency. Working together (especially where there was co-location) allowed a better understanding of each others’ circumstances –information flowed more easily when co-located. For example, the co-location of a police officer with the local authority enabled better co-ordination of response, especially for ‘quality of life’ issues such as graffiti or low-level nuisance.

On the other hand, a number of respondents believed that a ‘not invented here’ syndrome remained (for example, road safety ideas by agencies who were new to the partnership); that personalities and individual relationships were key, and these varied across time and agency; for some contractual obligations remained at the heart of their work (especially health-based commissioning), and so trust was limited by formal relationships with partners.

In addition, there is a separate issue of trust: from government to network. WAG was seen to be relatively laissez-faire, often with a light touch inspection regime; and high degree of consensus on notions of public value, if not on the detailed process.

This completes the four dimensions looking at government and the network. The next discussion area focuses on the internal workings of the network itself, beginning with innovation.



## Network Governance: Discussion Area 3 Network dynamics

<i>Discussion heading</i>	<i>Dimension</i>
Agency vs structure	Agency vs structure
Separation from government	Autonomy Centralisation Tiers of government Trust
<b>Network dynamics</b>	<b>Innovation</b> <b>Interdependence</b> <b>Openness</b> <b>Resources</b>
Governance and NPM	Governance and NPM

**Dimension 4 innovation:** *Network governance demonstrates significant levels of innovation in designing and carrying out policy. Network governance reflects the extent to which new activity exists only because of action by the network.*

The dimension was posed to respondents as a specific and carefully-designed question, reflecting a theoretical view (Hendricks and Topps 2005) that a network can demonstrate its' status as a true network by a) harnessing the talent pool within the network, thus showing that the group dynamics are operating b) use these to develop new policies and ideas independent of central government. A level of autonomy and local response is expected of genuine network governance (Goss 2001, Entwistle *et al* 2007). If some hierarchical control was being exercised, the network would be more concerned about implementing ideas and policies defined centrally (Munro *et al* 2008).

Some specifically identified that they could think of no example of the CSP developing new ideas itself; the CSP merely implemented what was decided centrally, the network

itself being a structure and methodology for achieving this. However, others could cite such examples: for example, using A & E data to identify hotspots, or a study on the night-time economy. They felt the CSP had now adjusted to become a more outward-thinking body that was prepared to implement new ideas:

“The mindset has changed” (C4)

Some identified a more subtle mixture; the basic ideas flowed down from government, the CSP held some local flexibility and adaptability. The innovation was at this micro-level, rather than at a more macro-based policy level. It also allowed slightly longer-term thinking and better co-operation. The innovation lay not in policy development or large projects, but in smaller-scale innovations at ‘ground level’ using the CSP to provide a wider range of skills and resources:

“A fair amount would be done anyway, but the partnership brings closer working with partners...[there are] more tools in the box” (C5)

The nature and direction of the work had not changed, and was still steered firmly by government requirement, setting priorities and parameters. The CSP allowed some ‘additionality’ due to linking strands of work and areas of specialism, which would not be possible without the network (‘additionality’ being adding extra value to the existing requirement, or delivering other benefits on the back of the intended changes). There was little evidence of Carmarthenshire partnership operating as an innovative creator of ideas or policies; the processes followed sat in a narrow band of what was already known, understood, or government approved.

Overall, few could identify a policy instigated by the partnership itself; the partnership was implementing nationally-decided policy, with perhaps a few ‘tweaks’ in terms of process and/or structure. For network governance, this suggests a partnership driven to implement nationally-decided work, and less to innovate and create. Where innovation did take place it was low-level, local and often ‘tacked on’ to central government requirements. The dimension of innovation is relatively untapped - partnerships are (and view themselves as) a means of delivery and implementation, with relatively little scope for genuine creativity.

For PSE this suggests a lack of freedom and trust from central government down to the partnership, but also a lack of ambition within the partnership itself. Innovation is seen as something to do around the margins. High innovation would imply a robust PSE: public servants prepared to step outside existing parameters to pursue the public good: this does not appear to be present.

A second facet of the network's internal dynamics is the degree of interdependence between its members. This is considered in the next section.

***Dimension 5 interdependence: Network governance demonstrates a coherent system, which still allows entry and exit as part of its on-going dynamic. Network governance reflects the extent to which the network is an open or closed system for new entrants.***

One of the criteria for identifying network governance is the degree of interdependence between the members of that network (Bevir & Rhodes 2003, Kooiman 2003). This relates to the dynamics of the group, the asymmetric power relationships at work within it, and the ease of entry and exit (Pierre & Peters 2000). Effective network governance has a high degree of interdependence: individuals rely on each other, using a high degree of informal trust and professional respect. Systems and processes would depend upon consistent interaction, and each other's abilities and resources. Partnership low on network governance would show a strong degree of asymmetry in terms of influence and power; formal rules and contractual arrangements would dominate; and some of the members would operate mainly within their own 'silos'.

Most respondents identified examples of an intrinsic need to co-operate across organisational boundaries:

“No rivalries whatsoever...we work together as much as we can” (C7)

Although this was directly contradicted elsewhere:

“...if authority number one proposes something, authorities three, four and five will say ‘we’re not doing that’”. (C6)

Most felt at least some aspects of their role that could not be achieved by their agency working solo:

- \* co-operating on licensing work,
- \* getting other agencies involved in youth work,
- \* tying agencies together on cross-cutting issues such as substance misuse.

Some interdependence was formalised in structural arrangements; because CSP approval or support was required, or because government funding required formalised co-operation. This overt requirement led to formal sub-groups producing funding bids and delivery on projects: such structures were created by funding bid requirements, but tied together the work of various agencies in a formalised way. Without such an overt and formal obligation these agencies may not have co-operated, or might have done so in an ad-hoc, informal way. Interdependence was increased by overt statements about how co-operation would operate.

Limitations to interdependence remained, because of cultural barriers between organisations, and funding/ performance management issues. These issues focused attention on organisation rather than group responsibility. The picture was generally one of growing co-operation, sometimes enhanced or required by government and/or structure. Work had begun to cross traditional silos, some co-location was taking place, joint performance indicators and budget management was being developed.

For network governance, the growing co-operation indicates a maturing of the partnership away from simply implementation, towards joint working practices and shared responsibility and accountability. Greater interdependence is partly forced by government requirement, but also developing into a default position when considering new work.

For PSE, the implications are more mixed. On the one hand, a partnership demonstrating more trust, and driven towards co-operation, might be seen to enhance the PSE - focusing on societal benefit and subsuming individual (or organisational) goals. On the other hand, this may sacrifice local adaptability and individual

innovation: interdependence develops because government says it should, without directly demonstrating the public good is being served. Partnership may become a knee-jerk reaction and truism – the mantra automatically becomes ‘*we’ll work in partnership to deliver it*’ without significant thought about the wider public good.

Part of the dynamics of a network – and a potential criticism of it – lies in the degree of openness exhibited by the network as an entity. The next section explores this dimension.

**Dimension 7 *openness*: extent to which the CSP is an open or closed system – who can join and under what circumstances**

One attribute of network governance is ease of entry and exit (Pierre & Peters 2000). New blood can be part of the dynamics of a network, and how networks change in static environments (Damgaard 2006) Openness also reflects the dynamics of the network, such as interdependence, trust and communication (Entwistle et al 2007).

Respondents felt membership of the CSP, and entrance to it, was driven by external factors. This was not personal or organisational reluctance; more that membership was driven by government decision:

“Legislation has forced it...without that we wouldn’t be where we are today.” (C12)

Some felt CSPs merely aggregated linkages that were already there; another that changes in membership came only when new areas of work were required. Once members joined, they often struggled to find a role and/or acceptance. Problems included a reluctance to embrace the ideas of new members, give credit for those ideas, or abandon existing personal or organisational rivalries:

“oh, this is ours, what are they trying to do and take away our ‘glory’? As soon as they were given that remit, they had a voice then.” (C8)

Openness was not seen as central - new partners found it difficult to adjust and find their feet; there was a 'not invented here' syndrome and rivalries between partners. New partners had come on board, but because of statute rather than invitation. The partnership was not overtly hostile, but reliance on relationship-building meant it took time for new partners to find an effective role. The partnership was therefore open, but reluctant to take on new ideas immediately. New entrants had to begin gradually, win acceptance, and slowly increase the influence of their ideas.

This dynamic indicated organisations were placing their own agendas above a longer-term, wider notion of public good, and conservatism about new ideas. However, this conservatism may support PSE rather than counter it. This argument would propose that an element of PSE is stability: the importance of enduring values and a longer-term perspective mean major change happens relatively slowly. Thus conservatism aids PSE by enhancing stability and long-term thinking; the flip side is slow integration of new entrants and their ideas.

The final aspect of network dynamics to be explored is resources. Networks must share resources, and the degree to which they can do so successfully is explored in the next section.

***Dimension 8 – resources: Network governance demonstrates a system in which network members negotiate or co-operate over resources.***

In public service, control and division of resources are key: almost a proxy for power and influence (Rhodes 1996, Gains 2004). A network given full responsibility for spending its' own budget would be strong and autonomous (Stoker 1998, Kokx & van Kempen 2010). However, a budget shared according to central edict, and subject to stringent controls and conditions, would indicate a weaker network. Co-operation within the network on assigning and aligning resources indicates member dynamics, and relative power: partnerships are unequal constructs.

The CSP's existence gave it access to funding streams not available to individual agencies:

“...before the CSP existed, there were other structures that administered similar funding streams and they may well have funded similar things...Some of the projects that we’ve been involved in, and the funding we’ve received, have to be signed off by that partnership...” (C16)

There were negative elements to this, such as some reluctance to see the circumstances of others:

“There is always tension as to a) where is the money coming from, b) what it can be used for, and c) where it can be used.” (C4)

Tension around budgets declined as the CSP itself matured. CSP debate was focused on priorities not funds: the CSP gave fresh structure to the debate.

In making resource allocation decisions, there were few arguments about resources and where/how they should be applied. A number of reasons were given:

- \* The partnership had matured since initiation, so relationships (and the CSP structure) helped to smooth the way
- \* Government imposed conditions or restrictions on funding – the lack of leeway prevented debate
- \* Funding was usually for discretionary not core activity – so the debate was about prioritisation rather than money
- \* Some resource arguments were about time and opportunity cost, rather than actual cash, taking some heat out of discussions.

This concludes the discussion area of network dynamics. The next discussion area looks specifically at the impact of NPM on network behaviour – has it retained a strong influence, or is this now changing?

## Network Governance: Discussion Area 4 Governance and NPM

<i>Discussion heading</i>	<i>Dimension</i>
Agency vs structure	Agency vs structure
Separation from government	Autonomy Centralisation Tiers of government Trust
Network dynamics	Innovation Interdependence Openness Resources
<b>Governance and NPM</b>	<b>Governance and NPM</b>

**Dimension 6 NPM structures:** *Network governance is impacted by the extent to which the network represents a demonstrable shift in governance, or continues with previous governance structures and processes.*

The dimension establishes how far the CSP represents a change from previous, NPM-style governance. Large vestiges of an NPM approach to public sector governance would suggest the network is, at best, nascent; at worst, limited (Goss 2001, Newman 2001, Maesschalk 2003). The retention of NPM-style governance reflects on both the willingness/ability of the network to develop, and ability and preparedness of government to allow this (Farnham & Horton 1996, Bevir & Rhodes 2003, McDonough 2006).

The interviews highlighted three aspects of NPM:



- a) Objective- and target-setting: some felt objectives were set entirely at government level; others cited local decisions, or a mixture of the two. Overall, there seemed a domination by central bodies
- b) Performance management: work was mainly judged in terms of process and outputs, rather than outcomes; with little sense of broader, longer aims. For example, citing a government system of performance measurement, it was acknowledged that one key indicator was ‘top of the performance pyramid’:

“but the pyramid is still there...the base of the pyramid is widening all the time” (C4)

- c) Audit and inspection: perception split between feeling audit and inspection was output-based, and feeling it was light-touch and/or based more around outcomes. The latter was not necessarily seen as optimal:

“a lot of the local authorities [have been] dragged kicking and screaming to that point, and even now you’ll have them whinging.” (C8)

The Assembly targets took Westminster targets and ‘added value’ (i.e. changed the performance target slightly), without significant relation to a Welsh national context, let alone Carmarthenshire. Managerialist-type measures have abounded, emphasising processes or outputs, not longer-term outcomes. Audit and inspection reflected this general principle, assessing how processes had been conducted and not the overall societal impact. Again, this suggests a network that is not trusted, and is viewed as an implementation arm of government. The focus on short term and measurable performance targets, lacking clear mandate or local justification, militates against PSE.

But many felt the audit and inspection regime was relatively light-touch; especially so for local authority roles, less so for Home Office work or, increasingly, NHS activity. Audit and inspection philosophy seems tied either to more centralisation than other government departments (Home Office), or distant from the partnership because it is not viewed as a ‘core activity’ (NHS).

Carmarthenshire partnership was primarily implementing national (i.e. mainly Assembly) priorities and targets, rather than developing performance criteria and priorities from the ground upwards. For network governance this is a lack of autonomy and trust from central government, partnership implementing not innovating, not trusted to develop local responses to local issues – the ‘hierarchy in disguise’ recognised by Damgaard (2006). For PSE this lack of trust is also critical: implying public servants are implementing policy through detailed rules and processes. Public servants are discouraged from innovating or considering wider or longer-term issues: the focus is on short-term and measurable delivery.

This section concludes the look at NPM and network governance, and is the last of the ten dimensions of network governance. The next section begins the evidence on PSE, starting with the discussion area of public interest. This discussion area has three dimensions – the first is accountability.

## Public Service Ethos: Discussion Area 5 Public interest

<i>Discussion area</i>	<i>Dimension</i>
<b>Public interest</b>	<b>Accountability</b> <b>Public interest</b> <b>Wider and longer thinking</b>
Impact of governance	Degree of trust Impact of NPM processes Role of commissioning/contractual work
Impact of organisation	Socialization vs self-selection Cultural-specific Impact of working level Outcomes/processes/traits Variance
Impact of individual	Loyalty Motivation Personal values
Ethos comparison	vs voluntary sector vs public sector ethos

**Dimension 11 accountability: a PSE is demonstrated by an understanding of the public interest, as well as direct accountability for actions taken on behalf of the public. Public servants are accountable to the public for the underlying principles of action, as well as the actions themselves.**

Previous definitions of PSE have often included a patrician ‘we know best’ attitude from public servants, towards the best interests of a group, or society (Pratchett & Wingfield 1996, Denhardt & Denhardt 2000, O’Toole 2006). This dimension looks at

evidence of this approach, and how accountability for decisions and actions is displayed. This may demonstrate a more modern PSE, or how it has changed.

Some 'patrician' vestige remained, but others stated specifically that the CSP was moving away from this:

"it is bottom-up meeting top down; whereas before it was all top-down."

(C4)

"Much more customer-focused; moving away from paternalistic 'we know best' local authority". (C1)

Respondents talked more of structures for delivering accountability, than accountability itself. This included structures for consultation, involvement and feedback from the public; or accountability now at a lower, neighbourhood level, rather than county-wide. Greater stress was placed on explanation – not always changing or shaping policies, but explaining circumstances and reasoning. Significant differences in approach between partner agencies were noted:

"Probably within the NHS there is a stronger culture of being patient/client-focused, because that's what the entire organisation is geared up towards doing. Within the local authority...it's not just about serving the individuals...perhaps as you go up the management scale to chief executives perhaps some of that gets diluted...what's interesting from a voluntary sector point of view is that there are differences between voluntary organisations." (C16)

Some agencies felt their role was still to decide on priorities and areas for action; accountability was about explaining change, not the public deciding on the direction of work. Some felt this was offset by more participation and involvement at neighbourhood level – i.e. the focus of accountability had changed from holding the whole organisation to account over general performance, to holding individuals to account for local issues. However, the overall direction was towards more accountability through greater transparency, and a less patrician outlook towards the public.

Network governance theory acknowledges the danger (Rhodes 1996) of a network becoming more concerned with internal interdependencies, and less with external accountability (Elcock 2011). This is an issue in Carmarthenshire CSP, which has either a patrician outlook towards accountability, or focus on demonstrating the *mechanisms* for accountability. Networks risk being internally focused; government requirements for consultation attempt to offset this risk. Carmarthenshire CSP believes local involvement is a synonym for accountability; consultation before setting objectives is analogous to accountability for performance.

The approach, therefore, also creates the following problems for PSE:

- \* Remoteness – the CSP is an entity without an obvious centre or focus. It is the sum of many parts, and accountability falls through the cracks between these parts. Services are organised remotely from the public, and do not support the kind of accountability that PSE thrives upon
- \* Proxies – local involvement at a micro-level, or consultation during planning, is assumed to be accountability. PSE needs genuine accountability not proxies: otherwise, PSE suffers from a lack of public involvement, or genuine attempt to gauge the public good.
- \* Internal focus – PSE involves looking beyond job descriptions, organisational issues or other internal aspects; PSE needs an outward focus on the public interest, and an altruistic intent. The internal focus of this approach to accountability undercuts these aspects of PSE.

The next section examines the dimension of public interest itself – who defines it, and the part it plays in shaping service delivery

***Dimension 21 public interest: a PSE is demonstrated by a commitment to uncovering and supporting the public interest. A PSE is visible in how this interest is decided upon, and the balance between individual and group/societal needs.***

The ‘public interest’ is an intrinsic part of any view of PSE; PSE is defined partly how individuals and organisations act in the public interest, even where this conflicts with

other factors such as convenience, personal benefit, or short-term gains (Farnham & Horton 1996, Pratchett & Wingfield 1996, Public Administration Committee 2002, McDonough 2006, Park et al 2008, Elcock 2013). The public interest is a cornerstone of PSE (Moore 2000, Smith 2004, O'Toole 2006, DuGay 2008, Kim & Vandenabeele 2009). Definitions of public interest focus on the balance of needs, wishes and prioritisation between the individual and the societal/community (Farnham and Horton 1996, Public Administration Committee 2002, McDonough 2006). This dimension assesses how the public interest is decided upon (and by whom), and how public services decide between the interests of the individual (including the individual customer or organisation) and the wider community/society.

Some felt government largely dictated 'public interest'; by setting objectives, targets, and resources. Some detected a change from a 'patrician' view of public interest, towards greater consultation that now considered wider issues and wider remits. This consultation is part of a general planning framework that decides overall public interest and priorities - the public's view of the public interest is embodied in the planning system itself:

"that's what sets our priorities in terms of the main crimes we need to be tackling" (C9)

Others felt that public agencies should define the public interest, using their expert and wide-ranging view. They argued the public interest is agreed by public organisations in conjunction with government, although that view may change over time:

"If the CSP didn't exist we would still be pursuing some of the ways of working that we are...where the CSP will have influenced the direction of things is perhaps more around some of the criminal justice initiatives...perhaps the impact of substance misuse on the community rather than on the individual...perhaps we have a broader view of substance misuse now" (C16)

Public organisations have to grapple with the difficulty of short-term versus long-term benefit, which feeds into notions of the PSE:

“We have to be certain that we’re meeting the needs of the most needy, and not everyone who thinks they may need something...there are things [where] we do have that dilemma quite regularly around ‘if somebody needs £50 today, and we justify that, will that enable them to become independent, or will that foster a dependence on us?’” (C16)

There was also a view that the public interest was, in fact, decided by the Assembly; both the partnership and the public were recipients of the resulting decisions, rather than being actively involved.

For network governance, the public interest issue feeds into notions of autonomy and trust in the ability of professionals to define what needs to be done, and how to do it. Network governance would accept, to a degree, a paternalistic approach to the public interest, where professionals decided what it was and how to encompass it.

The issues raised above are more problematic for analysis of PSE. ‘Public interest’ as a concept is not merely the opinion of professionals about what is in the best interests of the public. It is an active, continuous and iterative process; it can be seen in the sacrifice of personal convenience, and in long-term thinking and wider considerations of public servants. What is seen in this case study instead is an acceptance that politicians – *ipso facto* – must be custodians, recipients and transmitters of the public interest. There is little evidence of agencies thinking beyond terms set by political masters as performance measures, and little evidence of wider and longer-term thinking to advance the public interest (this point is expanded in a number of other dimensions, and in Chapters Eight and Nine). The CSP is currently attempting to efficiently implement priorities and measures set in Cardiff (priorities set with little public involvement). The CSP does not consider any dichotomy between what is expedient/politically desired in the short term, and best for the public interest in the long term.

The third dimension under the ‘public interest’ discussion area is wider and longer thinking: the notion that the public interest requires a certain perspective to both appreciate and implement it. This is explored next.

***Dimension 26 wider and longer thinking: a PSE is demonstrated by consistent long-term thinking aimed at the wider public interest. A PSE is concerned with the extent of thinking beyond the short term, outside of job description or organisation, towards community and societal requirements***

PSE stresses the desirability of thinking long-term rather than short-term (Denhardt & Denhardt 2000, Hoggett 2006, DuGay 2008), and thinking outside both the job description and the organisation, to bigger community-wide or societal issues (Shacar 2000, Haqle 2007, Diefenbach 2009). The dimension looks at evidence of this wider and longer-term thinking.

Some of the interviewees felt that the partnership enabled wider and longer issues to be addressed – although ‘proving success’ in tackling them remained difficult – and that the CSP allowed organisations to look at the underlying causes of problems, rather than fire-fighting symptoms. WAG may add to this feel, providing a stable and largely consensual structure over the CSPs that encouraged long-term planning; also, as voluntary organisations took an increasing role, they often brought (or developed) a national feel to their work, which fed in to the CSP.

Societal changes and national issues unrelated to community safety flowed into partnership thinking in a loop, reinforcing each other. For example expenses scandals, City bonuses and other news stories affected the public mood about public services and public servants – a cynicism which discouraged longer-term thinking in favour of ‘quick wins’.

In relation to network governance, wider and longer-term thinking may be a product of a network’s relatively secure position in policy development and implementation: it can afford the luxury of such thinking. The absence of it suggests the CSP does not feel this security – it is not securely involved in policy development because WAG does so much of this; it does not feel secure in its basic premise because government has changed its structure, membership and objectives frequently; everything WAG does is predicated around short-to-medium-term thinking linked to the electoral cycle. The absence of wider and longer term thinking is symptomatic of the lack of trust from government, and the time frames used by government.



For PSE, the absence of wider and longer term thinking is a significant issue. Without it, the PSE struggles to embody and further the public interest; actions become short-term and connections between policy areas become lost. This leads to unintended policy consequences, which also erode the public interest and the PSE's ability to further it.

This concludes the discussion area of public interest. The next three discussion areas move from a broad focus to a tight focus, in assessing the key influencers of PSE. The first of these is therefore the impact of governance; starting with a look at trust

## Public Service Ethos: Discussion Area 6 Impact of governance

<i>Discussion area</i>	<i>Dimension</i>
Public interest	Accountability Public interest Wider and longer thinking
<b>Impact of governance</b>	<b>Degree of trust</b> <b>Impact of NPM processes</b> <b>Role of commissioning/contractual work</b>
Impact of organisation	Socialization vs self-selection Cultural-specific Impact of working level Outcomes/processes/traits Variance
Impact of individual	Loyalty Motivation Personal values
Ethos comparison	vs voluntary sector vs public sector ethos

***Dimension 14 degree of trust: a PSE is demonstrated by the principle of vertical and horizontal trust between individuals and groups. The extent of reliance on contract or other forms of ‘proof’ of performance, and the degree of autonomy granted, will demonstrate the extent to which this dimension is visible and operational***

High-trust relationships are taken by some commentators (Plant 2003, O’Toole 2006) to indicate a vibrant PSE. But strong dependence on ‘proof’ of performance, and/or reliance on contractual terms, indicate a preference for doing what is required or stated,

focusing attention on the job description or immediate remit of the individual (Lawton 2004). Contractual reliance appears to cut cross some tenets of PSE (though it could support the PSE in other ways). This dimension seeks to understand trust between CSP members, and what this might imply for PSE.

Some felt the mere existence of the CSP produced greater trust between its members:

“Legislation has forced it...without that we wouldn’t be where we are today” (C12)

with the key to improving trust tackling new areas of work together; trust existed as everyone was learning. Others believed such trust-building was not taking place, as organisations continued old political battles:

There is rivalry...very, very possessive over their own ideas...” (C8)

Others cited different sources of trust-building: sharing of information; co-location of staff; or WAG itself demonstrating greater trust of CSP partners; this trickled down to the partners themselves:

“There is no guidance, really, from the Assembly in terms of how you should establish your partnership structure, so it’s not dictated at all, and they do vary”(C6)

But contracting out or commissioning work militated against trust, partly because it restricted what was permitted or acceptable; partly because it de-skilled existing staff and created barriers between service providers:

“[existing professionals] feel their role is slightly diluted” (C5)

Most identified that the partnership had improved trust between public services, and working on new ventures had improved such trust. However, contracting out of services reduced trust levels, by implying that work should be to contractual terms. Trust by

government in public services - that WAG was exhibiting trust in the partnership – or the trust of the public, were rarely viewed as key issues.

For network governance, this fits theoretical notions that trust is largely internal, fostering interdependence and mutual respect among professionals. This seems to be gradually evolving for Carmarthenshire. However, trust from government is still low, undermining other key aspects of network governance such as autonomy.

In terms of PSE, lack of trust from government is also pertinent – it does not allow other elements of PSE to flourish. Internal trust, to levels exhibited in this case study, does not encourage PSE beyond allowing the partnership to function fluidly.

The effect of governance will also be demonstrated by the degree to which NPM processes have affected, and/or continue to impact upon, the PSE. This is the next dimension.

***Dimension 15 impact of NPM processes: a PSE will be demonstrated by adherence to overarching principles, albeit within prevailing governance systems. PSE will be affected by the way in which governance is enacted; in this instance, by NPM and network governance***

It has been argued that New Public Management is a block to a PSE (Farnham and Horton 1996, Thompson 2006, Haqle 2007, Elcock 2012). This occurs because NPM requirements place undue emphasis on what can be measured and observed, produce short-term and limited thinking, impose targets and objectives from above, and reduce room for individual manoeuvre (Boyne 2002, Merali 2003, Lawton 2004, Plowden 2004, O'Toole 2006). Evidence of NPM measures might indicate a falling or struggling PSE (NPM is a recurring theme, and explored further in Chapters Eight and Nine).

Many of the interviewees felt that NPM measures were either in decline, or not onerous; some believed that they were increasing, or currently significant. Of the former, examples were cited of fairly broad objectives with no insistence on interim targets; funding without significant audit of either process or outcome; targets for outputs that were easy

to accomplish. WAG management of the CSP was fairly arms' length and long-term, as one interviewee summarised:

“The pressure isn't on us here to show results as it would be if you were in the private sector...it's not profit-driven...I couldn't get away with my strategies in the private sector...I'm not showing a short sharp set of results which I would need to in the private sector” (C7)

However, in certain areas, NPM had either remained significant, or had recently become a stronger issue. Recent changes in health infrastructure and funding had led to a higher level of scrutiny, insistence on demonstrating outputs, and filtering down of targets from above. Areas of work still controlled by the Home Office retained a style that was more NPM-oriented, and out of step with WAG's approach. For example, the Home Office were more interested in detection of crime and less interested in prevention; the Home Office chose different benchmarking criteria; and used a different audit and inspection philosophy.

Overall there was a split: some felt WAG was increasingly hands-on and imposing NPM strictures, some felt WAG was moving away from NPM and becoming more *laissez-faire*. Overall, it suggests the degree of NPM requirements is broadly static in net terms, though changing in many individual areas.

NPM is symptomatic of a governance system that favours a market-based structure or, failing that, hierarchical control from the centre using business planning methods. There is little evidence of private sector involvement, beyond the commissioning of some health-based services. But hierarchical control and the use of business planning, performance management and other NPM tools are more prevalent, especially in health and policing. For the partnership, WAG appears to offer a more *laissez-faire* approach that modifies some of NPM's stronger features, but this is patchy and subject to change over time; the Home Office and Health are stronger proponents of NPM. *Laissez-faire* fits with a network's need for autonomy, trust and room for manoeuvre; its patchy and partial nature suggests that hierarchical influence of government is rarely far away.

PSE thrives where there is trust, some local autonomy, and wider thinking that focuses on long-term public benefit. NPM, by contrast, is short-term and narrower in its thinking – often concerned with what can be measured, and where causality can be inferred. The strictures of performance management and planning frameworks narrow the public servant's vista; they emphasise what is tangible and measurable, and set aside long-term consequences or unintended impacts on other aspects of public service. The continued use of NPM (especially by the Home Office) would seem to undermine the tenets of PSE.

The final dimension in this discussion area looks at the degree to which partnership work is formalised and determined by contractual terms, rather than informal trust. This is considered next.

***Dimension 22 impacted by contractual factors: a PSE is demonstrated by a reliance on trust, rather than contractual relationships and obligations.***

CSP work involves negotiation around nominal resources – time or theoretical costs. But when work is commissioned this work changes: formal or contractual arrangements begin, and cash is moved. This feeds into issues of trust: perhaps the tangible nature of what is exchanged, and the formalisation of conduct, influences the PSE (Bogdanor 2004, Brereton & Temple 1999, Grimshaw et al 2003, Plant 2003).

Some felt that commissioning de-skilled the professionals involved, by prescribing conduct and reducing trust relationships. It was also de-motivating; professionals were administering contractual arrangements. There was greater managerial control from government, since public money was changing hands. However, commissioning could give some autonomy:

“Possibly...there's a freedom with having that money, and being to allocate it to where you want to allocate it...” (C14)

Overall, responses focused on negative aspects, including a tendency to micro-manage the contract using narrow performance measures rather than outcomes. This outweighed the view that commissioning freed up time and effort by devolving responsibility.

Commissioning and contracts are NPM measures, but carry important weight for network governance. Left to their own devices, using professional skills and interdependence, a network can demonstrate autonomy (and government trust) by organising matters themselves. The centralised control of commissioning demonstrated here implies the opposite: micro-managing of contractual arrangements, excessive audit requirements, and a lack of trust. These all suggest that, as a bellwether of the partnership's status as a bona-fide network, there is central control and a lack of both trust and autonomy.

Commissioning might support PSE by embodying the public interest in legally-enforceable terms; requiring contractors to consider wider, longer-term and more societal issues than simply performance targets. But central government do not encourage, allow, or even consider such a use for commissioning contracts. They appear to be a tight, narrow legal process, formalising arrangements and requiring enforcement. The de-skilling and de-motivating elements are particularly relevant – implying public servants have little chance to display a PSE.

This concludes the dimensions relating to the discussion area of impact of governance. Next, the discussion area moves to a narrower focus on the organisation. There are five dimensions within this, the first of which assesses the relative impacts of socialisation and self-selection.

## Public Service Ethos: Discussion Area 7 Impact of organisation

<i>Discussion area</i>	<i>Dimension</i>
Public interest	Accountability Public interest Wider and longer thinking
Impact of governance	Degree of trust Impact of NPM processes Role of commissioning/contractual work
<b>Impact of organisation</b>	<b>Socialization vs self-selection</b> <b>Cultural-specific</b> <b>Impact of working level</b> <b>Outcomes/processes/traits</b> <b>Variance</b>
Impact of individual	Loyalty Motivation Personal values
Ethos comparison	vs voluntary sector vs public sector ethos

**Dimension 12** *cultural socialization vs self-selection: a PSE is demonstrated by a combination of pre-existing moral or ethical approaches, and inculcation through working environment: a PSE will demonstrate both underlying conditions*

An important concept for PSE is the extent to which it emerges from existing values, from exposure to a culture, or from attitudes existing and developing within an organisation (Audit Commission 2002, Becker & Connor 2005, McDonough 2006, Stackman et al 2006, Christensen & Wright 2009). Is the PSE simply an extension of the



pre-existing culture of a public body, or is there a drive or philosophy that is more intrinsic within the individual (Lewis & Frank 2002, Buelens & Broek 2007, Park *et al* 2008)? If the latter, does this represent an element of self-selection – i.e. the current situation is the aggregate of previous recruitment and application processes, creating an element of ‘self-fulfilling prophecy’ about the ethos that results?

Respondents explained what had drawn them into their role. Some mentioned a desire to serve the public, and make a difference:

“interested in making a difference...creating things that improved the lot for the authority and the community” (C5)

Others stated pragmatic reasons (needed a job, it happened to be advertised). Some believed that a PSE existed and was, in some way, intrinsic in those who joined:

“most people who work in the public sector do want to make a difference...it’s not nice things we’re dealing with most of the time...but it’s very much a public service” (C9)

“Because people are choosing to come in, and applying for those jobs, they have to have that [public service] ethos already; if they don’t have the ethos they won’t apply.” (C14)

“...if you took ‘public service’ to mean public service as delivered by...public organisations...people are more intrinsically motivated to working within those...something intrinsic that informs you somewhere along the way that motivates you or equips you to do that work.” (C16)

Others suggested managerialism had blunted the PSE:

“people see it as a job, or a career, and not a calling...it is this individualism that is causing the rot” (C4)

“There is a huge difference...in local government, if there’s a hurdle, can we be bothered to find a way around it? Oh well, we can’t do that then, we’ll do something else...Our sense of duty and work as a self-employed person is totally different to the public sector...” (C8)

Overall, the majority felt their reasons held some fundamental similarities to PSE – to work with the community; to ‘do some good’; to see change in their local area; to help others, or to ‘give back’ to a public service. Some explicitly stated that a ‘duty to serve’ exists and might be exemplified by attitudes, not just by outcomes of organisational action. However, others felt that the PSE was not there and was not crucial to their role, or that managerialist changes had blunted the PSE and damaged it. For some, the tone of the organisation was the result of self-selection over a period, rather than innate pressure from the organisation’s existing culture.

Network governance theory is concerned with cultural socialization mainly in the network’s ‘sense of self’ and the extent to which it implies interdependence among members. A strong identity and culture within the partnership would suggest a stronger network, as it grouped around recognised interdependencies. Carmarthenshire suggests a looser partnership: some underlying fundamentals exist (e.g. a sense of public duty), but are by no means unifying.

For PSE the implications are more defining. There is mixed evidence on whether respondents felt there was a prevailing PSE at work: some did, and felt it keenly; others had a more pragmatic view. There was ambivalence about whether the prevailing philosophy was innate among members, socialized, or a combination. The lack of clear group identity in the partnership is part of the ambivalence; it is hard to coalesce around an agreed attitude, if the group itself is not coalescing. There is mixed evidence that PSE prevails, and mixed views on where (if at all) such an ethos may have begun.

The partnership and partner organisations might also be influenced by cultural factors, from the region/nation where they are located. This possibility is explored in the next dimension.

***Dimension 13 cultural-specific: a PSE will demonstrate inherent consistencies across geographical or cultural space. However, the regional or historical context will alter the way in which these consistencies are played out in the public arena***

A strong PSE is likely to be visible in a variety of organisational and regional cultures (Pratchett 1999, Becker & Connor 2005, Wright 2007). While it may vary in some ways, it should be recognisable (Chapman 1993, Audit Commission 2002, Wright 2007). The dimension looks at whether the PSE is changed by exposure to a particular culture, or regional aspect, and if so, how this changes the PSE.

The Home Office and WAG were seen to demonstrate different cultures – this made CSP work more difficult:

“sometimes I feel that we’re on different wavelengths, with our priorities and their [WAG] priorities...we’re just a bolt-on”. (C3)

“In practice it is still difficult to make sure that the Home Office are aware that things are different within Wales...it [CSP] is now a regional delivery...[regional policing under WAG control would] reinvigorate that public ethos of the police service” (C4)

WAG offered (compared to Westminster), a longer-term and more consensual approach: for example, setting longer-term objectives for overall outcomes, rather than short-term targets. However, this focus was now becoming shorter, with more stringent audit and more central direction. The Home Office was more managerialist and closer to a centralised command approach. There was no clear case that Wales as a regional context was significantly different from England.

In relation to network governance, this means the partnership has not forged a singular identity from its regional location. There is no ‘Carmarthenshire way’ in what is done; the partnership is relatively generic in this regard, with pragmatic responses to logistical issues of distance, rather than philosophical choice. There is no underlying philosophy here – the partnership is a cookie-cutter network, subject to the same guidance and approach as others.

For PSE, the same issue applies. The partnership is not responding to long-term needs in a local population: what it does is shorter-term and subject to Cardiff or Westminster views. Lack of autonomy and local identity loses an aspect of PSE - it becomes a generic implementer of others’ views and priorities.

In assessing the impact of the organisation on a PSE, it must be recognised that organisations have different working levels – strata within the hierarchy. The next dimension explores what impact this might have on the PSE

**Dimension 16 *impact of working level: a PSE will be demonstrated as a principle across levels of organisational seniority. However, the ways and degrees in which a PSE can be demonstrated may vary across organisational levels.***

The impact of an individual's working level within a hierarchy on the PSE is often deemed to be significant (Lipsky 1980, Rainey & Bozeman 2000, Nielsen 2006, Buelens & Broek 2007, Hill & Hupe 2007). Theoretically, PSE will be different for those at senior levels than at the front line – partly a reflection of their responsibilities. However, it is significant if the level of the worker is a *material influence* on the PSE they can demonstrate, or wish to demonstrate. For example, a demoralised and micro-managed worker would be less likely to display a PSE, than a motivated and supported worker with considerable autonomy. The organisational culture can be reflected in the way different levels feel about what kind of PSE they can display, and so the PSE may be affected by the working level of the respondent.

Respondents felt an individual's level dictated whether they were able to change - or challenge - what prevented them displaying a PSE. Top-down requirements could straightjacket, management reticence could hinder:

“when they don't [listen to staff], that's when you get problems and people just work to their remit, and I think that's quite sad.” (C8)

Others suggested it was more a question of the individual's personality, as evidenced by this comment:

“partnership working depends on individuals, the success of partnership working tends to depend on the individuals, at both an operational and a strategic level...It's a case of having people in key positions that see that,

by working together, we can get far better information, which can then mean better-targeted resources to solve those issues.” (C9)

For some, the degree of PSE demonstrated was related to proximity to the ‘front-line’: PSE fell as the individual moved further away from direct service provision. Senior posts were deemed both less likely and less inclined to demonstrate a PSE because, being closer to government, senior managers were more strongly influenced by top-down thinking.

This issue impacts upon the way the network is structured. Network governance theory suggests a fairly flat network: members are similar in their seniority, skills, and professional status. While the partnership has a demonstrable hierarchy, the ad-hoc way in which working structures are formed and disassembled makes the structure loose and temporary. The place within a hierarchy matters, but it may alter what the individual is *seen* to do or think, rather than what actually occurs.

It also raises the question: is PSE only demonstrable where service is delivered? Senior staff being close to government decisions, and so reflecting government views, may make them too remote to demonstrate PSE. Alternatively, they are ideally placed to demonstrate PSE, but in a particular way. At service delivery level, PSE is more noticeable through altruism, neutrality, and other visible aspects of service provision. At a more senior level, it may be visible through trust of front-line staff, resisting measures that negatively affect PSE, and in showing longer-term and wider thinking about society/community impact. Senior staff does not seem to demonstrate these traits, and so less senior staff view them as not demonstrating PSE.

There is a considerable difference between focusing on outcomes, rather than processes or traits. The next dimension explores where the focus lies, and what this might mean.

**Dimension 19 *outcomes/processes/traits: a PSE is demonstrated by a commitment to outcomes. A PSE must co-exist with the organisation’s focus, which may be on changing processes, outcomes, or personal traits.***

PSE can be demonstrated in outcomes, processes or traits; or a combination of these. Theory has focused mainly on the PSE's impact in terms of outcomes or traits (Brereton & Temple 1999, Lawton 2004), but public service reform has concentrated on changing processes. PSE theory has started to suggest that the way in which services are delivered matters as much as the results they produce, or the thinking behind their delivery (Hoggett 2006). The dimension examines whether that new focus is reflected in the experience of public service provision.

Many discussed PSE in terms of process – the way in which services were organised and/or delivered. WAG processes do not always audit outcomes:

“they aren't interested in that at all”. (C9)

and so encourage a focus on the process. But working with other agencies had changed the process of both agencies:

“long term solutions rather than short term fixes”. (C12)

While many believed PSE could be seen in outcomes, measuring outcomes was difficult: government expected a provable result and so was disappointed. Government focus on measurable processes meant organisations put their effort into this – less measurable and more nebulous outcomes took a back seat.

PSE is demonstrable in the traits of those delivering the service, but this would not show in usual performance measurement systems:

“most people who work in the public sector do want to make a difference...it's not nice things we're dealing with most of the time...but it's very much a public service...You have to feel that you are making a difference...there are other ways that you need to look at [to get evidence of this difference]”. (C9)

Processes were the key vehicle - they drove government targets and inspection regimes: few respondents believed outcomes were a significant feature, with traits barely mentioned.

How services are provided (the means, structures and processes involved) are part of assessing the extent of network governance. Government focus on processes strengthens the network, by recognising that the organisation of processes matters. But preoccupation with processes and measurable outputs undermines the network - it implies a lack of trust; ignores outcomes; reduces autonomy by being prescriptive.

NPM-based focus on what can be measured led to agencies focusing on auditable trails of process, and demonstrable outputs. PSE views the overall outcome (often over many years and a wider community) as a key measure of effectiveness. The two approaches are incompatible. The former gains prominence, however, as funding depends on demonstrating what the government wants. This also ignores traits, because the government are only interested in the measurable. Government wishes to monitor what can be audited and inspected –processes, structures and records; the resources deployed. The focus on process underplays the role of outcomes and traits, directing organisations away from them and from key aspects of PSE.

The next dimension recognises that the partnership consists of a number of different organisations. It looks at the degree to which they retain this ‘seperateness’ within a partnership framework, and the implications for PSE

**Dimension 23 variance: a PSE is demonstrated consistently across organisations/partnerships. However, the way in which PSE principles manifest themselves may alter according to context.**

Some aspects of PSE are consistent; how it is demonstrated, and the stage of its development, will vary (Grimshaw *et al* 2003, Merali 2003, Buelens & Broek 2007). The dimension looks at differences between partner organisations: this may give insight into PSE dynamics within the partnership.

Some interviewees cited differences between local authority culture and other partners – councils being better attuned to listening to the community, but perhaps reluctant to pursue certain agendas. Cultural issues emerged: non-emergency organisations might be less responsive; new organisations joining the partnership had to ‘feel their way’ into the group.

Some partners were felt to ‘own’ the principle of community safety only when they were involved in an initiative that benefited them; there were problems with rivalries and politics between local authorities on a regional level. Health and voluntary services commissioned to carry out health services clashed - Health was more closely audited and subject to more restrictions:

“[Health] are part of a bigger machinery...voluntary sector can do those things quicker...as well, but quicker...” (C15)

Voluntary organisations were by no means uniform:

“...what’s interesting from a voluntary sector point of view is that there are differences between voluntary organisations.” (C16)

Network governance theory recognises legacy issues for network members coming from various organisations and contexts, so the existence of these is expected. However, some (especially tensions between sectors) undermine the cohesion of the network, and the interdependence of members. Carmarthenshire represents a fairly loose network, with little co-location, and agencies fitting partnership work into existing work. This loose affiliation appears to encourage variance between agencies, exacerbates existing power or resource inequality, and limits the pace of change. This latter point is supported by variance between established and newer members, and between public and voluntary agencies.

In terms of PSE, variance between agencies is likewise problematic, undermining the idea of a unifying and coherent philosophy. In a strong PSE, while differences between agencies would exist, they would be ‘smoothed over’ by a consistency of approach. The lack of this consistency implies that members of the partnership do not share a cohesive



PSE: this in itself contributes to a loose partnership arrangement. The degree of 'tight/loose' is explored in Chapter Seven (Derby City's experience of this), and in Chapters Eight and Nine.

This concludes the discussion area of impact of organisation. The evidence now becomes more focused still (having gone from governance to organisation) by looking at the individual. The first dimension for this is loyalty.

## Public Service Ethos: Discussion Area 8 Impact of individual

<i>Discussion area</i>	<i>Dimension</i>
Public interest	Accountability Public interest Wider and longer thinking
Impact of governance	Degree of trust Impact of NPM processes Role of commissioning/contractual work
Impact of organisation	Socialization vs self-selection Cultural-specific Impact of working level Outcomes/processes/traits Variance
<b>Impact of individual</b>	<b>Loyalty</b> <b>Motivation</b> <b>Personal values</b>
Ethos comparison	vs voluntary sector vs public sector ethos

**Dimension 17 loyalty: a PSE will be demonstrated by loyalty to the wider public interest, and not merely to organisation, client or profession.**

Theories on PSE explore who is displaying loyalty to whom (Farnham & Horton 1996, Pratchett & Wingfield 1996, Boyne 2002, Hoggett *et al* 2006). Loyalty is not merely about organisational dynamics: it is a proxy measure of priorities, and therefore what is desirable to demonstrate. Loyalty also covers the perspective of the individual – loyalty

and perspective to a wider society is likely to also display a PSE (Audit Commission 2002, Grimshaw *et al* 2003, Christensen & Wright 2009).

Working within the CSP had broadened some views of who was the customer or the community; some were now looking beyond the immediate customer and considering other factors (for example, linking home repairs with reducing worklessness). Others, however, felt working within the partnership had made little or no difference to their loyalty:

“If the partnership wasn’t there I would still be working with the same people...I would be able to get the same from them if there was no partnership.” (C8)

Loyalty in senior managers was towards their political masters; but some stated that they felt loyalty to community above all else:

“Everything we do has an impact on the community...Anyone that works in the public services, or are involved in this kind of area, is trying to make life better for communities.” (C9)

“See myself as part of a local team” (C12)

Voluntary bodies commissioned to carry out work were felt to be loyal to contractual terms – it was difficult for them to display loyalties beyond this, even if they wished to. Contractual terms gave a boundary to loyalty – once signed loyalty was, effectively, to the terms of the deal, not specific groups or aims. Loyalty to the community was offset by loyalty to political masters (even when there were two). Overall, loyalty was highly individual and not rooted in organisational structures, organisational history, or work area.

Loyalty gives a window on the strength of members’ feeling about the partnership. This dimension confirms that loyalties are mixed and complex, with little evidence that the partnership inspires loyalty. Belonging to a partnership has neither changed views of loyalties generally, nor directed them towards the partnership. The cohesion of the network is reduced by this absence of loyalty to the partnership.

The tenets of PSE – loyalty to the wider public, the public interest and societal benefit – are not strongly demonstrated here. Instead, loyalties revolve around the practicalities of who holds the purse strings, or who one works alongside, or the type of work conducted. This suggests that PSE is not an underpinning guide and does not strongly influence loyalty.

A second dimension for the individual is motivation: this is explored below.

***Dimension 18 motivation: a PSE is demonstrated by a commitment to serving the wider community. A PSE demonstrates a degree of altruism, which differs from personal and professional pride, and originates in the individual's motivation.***

PSE is closely linked to individual motivation – in some ways it is the philosophical basis of that motivation (Pratchett & Wingfield 1996, Audit Commission 2002, Boyne 2002, McDonough 2006, Kim & Vandenabeele 2009). This dimension looks at individual motivation in altruism – is it present, and if so, how it differs from personal or professional pride. PSE (as opposed to efficiency, effectiveness or customer satisfaction) should include some form of altruistic motivation (Audit Commission 2002, Lewis & Frank 2002, Wright 2007, Park *et al* 2008, Christensen & Wright 2009).

Some felt the previous ‘paternalistic’ culture had given way to more consultation, although altruism remained:

“Much more customer-focused; moving away from paternalistic ‘we know best’ local authority...we previously thought that we knew what we had to do” (C1)

The wider community and societal considerations involved, may take motivation beyond mere professional pride, as one interviewee felt:

“Yeah, absolutely...I think that if you work in a council, you have to want to fundamentally improve services to the public, because you get such a

slating for...other areas of the council...that it can be quite frustrating...it's crucial to remember that what we do is to make people feel safer..." (C9)

This altruistic motivation was judged intrinsic to the job and the staff that did it; work could not be done effectively without some altruism:

"Because...the client group you work with, particularly on the front line, is tough, and you give a lot of yourself...it's a very risky business and quite stressful." (C15)

That said, others compared altruistic motivation to professional and personal pride, and saw significant overlap:

"We have to work quite hard to continue to promote that sort of long term view...it's a difficult balance sometimes between people responding to individual needs and wants...but with keeping the direction of travel...that actually is a continual battle..." (C15)

"You do find people who don't care at all about the people they're working with...you can have people who don't care about the individuals but can still do a good job with them...you can get the other side where they care about the people but don't bother doing anything at all." (C14)

Others believed government impositions (funding, objectives, policies) had reduced their motivation and sense of altruism; some had not joined their organisation with any motivation for public service, but for pragmatic reasons.

Motivation was a complex issue and varied considerably among individuals, without apparent links to organisational or structural factors. It is closely linked to loyalty (dimension 17), in that loyalty could inspire motivation. Some felt altruism was a major motivator for them and their colleagues, and wider societal considerations fed into their motivation: it was less about paternalistic notions or 'public duty', and more customer care and professional pride.

Network governance does not rely on network members sharing the same motivation; but it runs smoother with a shared vision. This fosters interdependence, aids communication, builds coherence, and enables a ‘united stand’ against opposition or exogenous shock. A majority of interviewees share motivation in the sense of ‘doing some good’, but differ below this surface.

The contrast between professional pride and altruistic desire is not significant for partnership effectiveness. However, for PSE this contrast is crucial. Respondents identified a sense of professional pride in doing the best possible job: this differs from altruism, and the difference is important. Professional pride is internal to self, partnership or organisation: one can be professional and highly competent but disinterested in the societal outcome. But altruism demands an outward focus; professionalism becomes a means to an end, not an end in itself. Altruistic motivation fits with PSE: motivation by professional pride may contribute to PSE, but this is incidental not deliberate.

The third and final dimension concerned with the individual looks at the personal values of interviewees, and how this might reflect in their work.

***Dimension 20 personal values: a PSE is demonstrated by a link to personal values rather than a prevailing organisational or professional code.***

Theory suggests that PSE embodies some personal values of the individual demonstrating it (Rainey & Bozeman 2000, Lawton 2004, Kim & Vandenabeele 2009). Argument continues about PSE being self-selecting or the result of organisational culture, but most commentators agree it reflects personal values to some extent (Audit Commission 2002, Lewis & Frank 2002, Hogget *et al* 2006, McDonough 2006, Park *et al* 2008). The dimension explores whether PSE demonstrates personal values being exhibited, or the result of the organisation’s codified behaviour.

Some felt PSE reflected personal values, others did not:

“To a degree...I think that most people working here would put other people before them, but pay is an important part of what everyone does, I

think...a lot of people, they may enjoy helping people but if they're not paid to do it they'll go somewhere else...If all the funding disappeared right across the sector, I don't think you'd get many staff coming back in to volunteer...they'd be off doing something else.” (C14)

“It has to be your kind of thing, to work in drugs and alcohol treatment...you definitely get some people who come in for the pay and go home, but I think they're the absolute minority” (C15)

For some, PSE applied to their own personal values, but not those of colleagues:

“I have my doubts...we've lost that element [public service] from our thinking...people see it as a job, or a career, and not a calling... it is this individualism that is causing the rot.” (C4)

Others felt the sense of 'vocation' as a driver has gone; instead, the prevailing ethos is driven by a general desire for professionalism.

The dimension impinges on network dynamics: there is friction in how people view themselves, and their peers. Networks thrive on commonality of interest: interdependence needs members to feel of a similar mind. Conflict can occur (and be constructive) but only within limits set by shared values, concepts and beliefs. The evidence in this case study is of a network lacking such cohesion.

The evidence demonstrates a commitment to 'doing good' that might reflect PSE, but demonstrated mixed feelings about the exact motivation. Respondents' own motives aligned with altruism, but they felt their peers were motivated more by professionalism. There was also a significant minority who had no altruistic desire or vocation: pragmatic needs were considered primary. Given this minority, we can see that the PSE elements of vocation are in decline for many; and absent in some. The consequence is that PSE is diluted in a key component factor.

This completes the three dimensions concerned with the individual. The final discussion area looks at comparisons between public sector and the voluntary sectors. It also

assesses potential differences between PSE and what is known as a 'public sector ethos'.  
The comparison with the voluntary sector is considered first.



## Public Service Ethos: Discussion Area 9 Ethos comparison

<i>Discussion area</i>	<i>Dimension</i>
Public interest	Accountability Public interest Wider and longer thinking
Impact of governance	Degree of trust Impact of NPM processes Role of commissioning/contractual work
Impact of organisation	Variance Socialization vs self-selection Cultural-specific Impact of working level Outcomes/processes/traits
Impact of individual	Loyalty Motivation Personal values
<b>Ethos comparison</b>	<b>vs voluntary sector</b> <b>vs public sector ethos</b>

**Dimension 24 *voluntary sector: a PSE demonstrates clear differences from a voluntary sector ethos.***

The voluntary sector in CSPs works mainly in health and substance misuse. This dimension looks at differences between PSE and voluntary sector ethos. The latter operates under different conditions, restrictions, opportunities, financial models, time horizons – all these can potentially impact upon their ethos (Moore 2000, Audit Commission 2002, Public Administration Committee 2002, Plant 2003, Cooney 2004).

Voluntary groups had less financial security, but less accountability. They could be quicker and more flexible, but need not provide the full range of services as a public body: they could exhibit a different approach:

“...they [voluntary groups] will give more of themselves...[whereas] the ones who’ve come down the professional line will...keep themselves ‘boundaried off’” (C14)

“[Health] are part of a bigger machinery...voluntary sector can do those things quicker...as well, but quicker...” (C15)

Voluntary organisations were seen as more flexible, driven by altruism, and less hidebound by bureaucracy; they had less of a legacy of ‘how things are done here’ and so were more innovative and open.

However, the voluntary sector and its ethos were not homogenous:

“...what’s interesting from a voluntary sector point of view is that there are differences between voluntary organisations...Smaller, or different voluntary organisations, their values can be more heavily weighted towards the community they serve... one of the benefits of the voluntary organisation is that creativity and harnessing of the local community values and spirit...so you’re less likely to get that from a bigger national organisation.” (C16)

Although they may offer a purer version of a PSE (in terms of being overtly altruistic):

“...you could argue that that ethos of ‘something for nothing’ is more public-spirited than getting paid to do it...you sometimes see different types of people gravitate towards those services...a lot of social workers tend to gravitate towards the voluntary sector, and that’s out of some sense of duty and ethos.” (C16)

Volunteers can bring different (not necessarily better) thinking; the voluntary sector can fill niches and gaps in public provision; and may demonstrate more of a PSE in terms of being freed from bureaucracy and other inhibitors. But the voluntary sector had a more 'temporary' feel to it, lacking the financial stability or continuity of the public sector; they varied from one voluntary organisation to another; they were flexible within contractual arrangement, but unable to step outside those terms.

Voluntary organisations can be 'on the outside looking in' or an intrinsic part of the network. If the latter, they are often temporary members (or limited to certain activities), and carry less weight within the network. However, they can be either a catalyst for change, or signify a closing together of other members against change. The evidence of this case study is mixed.

Many interviewees feel that voluntary groups offer some kind of purer form of PSE than the public sector. Apparently less encumbered by bureaucracy, they may embody a stronger sense of community. However, no respondent mentioned the caveats applied by theorists. Theory notes that voluntary groups can, ultimately, step away; they can often 'cherry pick' clients; their role is limited and carefully defined; they are not the service provider of last resort. These facets were not mentioned by respondents. The most important element of this dimension is showcasing the absence of wider thinking about PSE among public servants: everything around voluntary services is discussed in the narrow terms of their job or sector.

The final dimension of the final discussion area, assesses PSE against a 'public sector ethos'.

***Dimension 25 vs public sector ethos: a PSE demonstrates a different approach to theoretical notions of a 'public sector ethos'. A PSE will be demonstrably different to an idea of loyalty to public sector processes and continuity***

One theoretical critique of PSE is that public organisations may exhibit a 'public sector ethos' rather than PSE (Laffin 1998, Brereton & Temple 1999, Public Administration Committee 2002, Christensen & Wright 2009) . A 'public sector ethos' is a belief that

services 'should' be provided by the public sector, and the maintenance and support of that public sector is a legitimate aim for an ethos. By contrast PSE would contend that service in the public interest is the key, rather than the status of those delivering it. This dimension looks for evidence of a public sector ethos.

Some interviewees felt public organisations had moved away from a potential public sector ethos, through greater consultation and involvement with the public: this had removed the patrician sense of setting agendas for the public, and barriers that made bureaucracy self-serving. Some argued the public sector could achieve more than the private sector, because it could be flexible in unusual situations, not hidebound by contractual terms. Others stated it was the role of public organisations to set objectives and parameters, not the public – although this could perpetuate rivalries:

“There is rivalry...very very possessive over their own ideas...part of the problem is maybe [that] they are given a lot of money now...and it's not ring-fenced.” (C8)

There were examples of a 'public sector ethos' - examples included government and partnership deciding priorities without public consultation; NPM making organisations more insular and fearful; and public organisation rivalries overriding important issues.

A public sector ethos fits comfortably into the role of networks; it enhances the sense of networks being the locus of professional knowledge, experience, contacts and capability to make decisions on others' behalf: the network as depository of skills and power. The evidence in this case study of elements of a public sector ethos allows for (and possibly enhances) the position of the network.

A public sector ethos and PSE are not, however, mutually incompatible: the former can co-exist with altruism, neutrality and consideration of long-term public benefit. However a public sector ethos largely excludes the public and so undermines PSE issues as public trust. A public sector ethos seems ill-equipped to deal with complex modern public services. Evidence of NPM driving organisations towards a public sector ethos by promoting fear and uncertainty, seems to support this view.

## **Conclusion**

This completes the detail of responses for Carmarthenshire for the 26 dimensions of network governance and PSE. The chapter has detailed interviewees' views for each dimension, and viewed the potential resonance of these responses for both network governance and PSE. Analysis of this data, and of the results from interviews in Derby City, are contained in Chapters Eight and Nine. In the next chapter, the interview responses of the Derby City case study are reviewed.

## **CHAPTER SEVEN - DERBY CITY CASE STUDY**

### **Introduction**

This section sets out the background to the Derby City partnership, as it relates to this research. Derby City is an area of 30 square miles and a population of 242,000 people; nearly one quarter are from an ethnic minority. The city's economy is based on service industries and a strong manufacturing base, with major employers such as Rolls Royce and Toyota (Derby City Council 2012). Crime levels within the CSP area (Home Office 2010) are around the England and Wales average, though violent crime is higher than average.

Derby City's Community Safety Partnership began in 1998, following the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 (Home Office 2010). Its development into the partnership seen today began in earnest in 2003. The Police Reform Act 2002 gave fresh impetus to tackling anti-social behaviour, and linking drugs and alcohol work to the community safety effort (Derby City CSP 2010).

In 2003 Derby City integrated the Youth Offending Service, Drugs and Alcohol Team, existing Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership, Domestic Violence Project and Anti-Social Behaviour Team, into a new Community Safety Partnership (CSP). The stated aim was to build a more coherent team approach, covering all aspects of community safety under one roof. These services became co-located within the same building (Derby City CSP 2010).

Other services have been added in subsequent years. Neighbourhood Management moved from local authority to CSP in 2006 (though this returned to the local authority in 2010). In 2007, responsibility for community cohesion and the government's Preventing Violent Extremism also came under the CSP (Derby City CSP 2010). An integrated Domestic Violence Unit (including voluntary bodies) was brought into the CSP in 2009 (Derby City CSP 2010).

All organisational boundaries for partner agencies are now contiguous with the CSP's boundary; Derby City council is a unitary authority with no district councils within it.

Derbyshire Police combined three previous Basic Command Units (BCUs) into one BCU covering the CSP's area in 2010.

The next section sets out the structure of the chapter.

## **Structure of the Chapter**

This chapter sets out and analyses the responses of the interviewees from Derby City CSP. Interviewees covered a range of functions, levels of responsibility, agencies and accountabilities (see Appendix B)

This chapter uses 18 interviews of staff within Derby City CSP, covering a range of functions, agencies, responsibilities, reporting mechanisms, levels of seniority and experience. The interviews have been anonymised to avoid individual identification. They are described by a letter and number: e.g. D9 refers to the ninth person interviewed in Derby City. This allows the reader to see patterns in respondents, without naming individual interviewees.

Semi-structured interviews were conducted, where each question was based on the ‘dimensions’ of network governance and PSE identified from literature (see Chapters One and Two). Structuring the interviews in this way allows the subsequent analysis of the data to also be rooted in the dimensions. This organises the analysis for the reader; but also demonstrates a chain linking the academic theory, to the interviews conducted, to the analysis of the data.

This is a key element of the research design: the interviews are not simply a chance for CSP staff to talk about their work. Instead, it is a focused (though iterative) interview that ensures all aspects of PSE and network governance are covered in the interview. The interview questions, the choice of case study as an approach, and the choice of the case studies themselves: all this has been deliberately arranged to integrate direct public service experience with the theoretical tenets of both network governance and PSE. The subsequent analysis of the interview data follows the same pathway, for the same reasons.

The chapter will look at the direct experience of practitioners developing and producing services for the CSP. The interviews asked respondents about their direct experience, but also asked them to consider the context (in time, geography and governance) in which this experience occurs. Because the interview questions (and the dimensions on which they are based) are identical in both case studies, direct comparison can be made between the two sets of data. Such comparison allows inference about the impact of underlying



governance factors, as well as assessing the degree of difference/similarity in the PSE displayed within each case study.

This chapter has been organised to use the dimensions of network governance and PSE. Each dimension is considered in turn, with an analysis of what was said by the interviewee, and how this can be assessed in terms of PSE and network governance within Derby City. This will build up into an analysis of data across all 26 dimensions. These dimensions are grouped into 9 discussion areas.

Some of the dimensions yielded richer data than others. This is in the nature of the subject at hand, and the subjective interpretation of interviewees. As a result, this study presents the relevant and important data and its implications – some sections may therefore be longer than others.

For ease of navigation, the dimensions relating to network governance are considered first, followed by the dimensions for PSE (however, the implications for both network governance and PSE are considered in every dimension). At the beginning of each dimension, there is a definition of that dimension and a graphic to show where that dimension fits into the overall structure.

Direct comparison between Derby City and Carmarthenshire is not included at this point: it comes in Chapter Eight. This is so that the reader can absorb the analysis of the dimensions for each case study, before the assessment of factors across the case studies is considered. These two case study chapters provide the rich, deep and contextually aligned research evidence from which to draw conclusions about the PSE and network governance, the reason for the selection of the two areas, and detailed explanation of the differences and similarities between them.

## Network Governance: Discussion Area 1 Agency versus structure

<i>Discussion heading</i>	<i>Dimension</i>
<b>Agency vs structure</b>	<b>Agency vs structure</b>
Separation from government	Autonomy Centralisation Tiers of government Trust
Network dynamics	Innovation Interdependence Openness Resources
Governance and NPM	Governance and NPM

***Dimension 1 agency versus structure: Network governance is a combination of agency and structure, and the interplay between them. Network governance reflects the nature and dynamics of the relationship between the role of the individual, and the structures within which they operate.***

Within network governance theory, there is debate around the importance of structure (how the network is established; processes and systems in place) and agency (the importance of individuals as relationship-builders and network developers) (Goss 2002, Marsh & Smith 2002, Hendricks & Topps 2005). The CSP is deliberately intended by government to use networks to implement community safety policy (DETR 1998). Government has, largely, dictated the structures used. This dimension assesses how much the CSP is driven by those structures, and how much by personal relationships and personalities: this shapes partnership dynamics and its fit with theoretical network governance.

The research suggests that structure may undermine relationships – i.e. structure had an adverse effect on personal contacts, and so created artificial distance and unnecessary barriers between people. Alternatively, a *lack* of structures could hinder relationships; personal relationships become too ad-hoc, and strengthen when formalised. Some identified personal relationships as the key ingredient; none cited structure as being the crucial factor throughout the partnership:

“Culture dictates the systems but ultimately it’s down to personalities...ultimately it goes on through relationships” (D1)

“[the partnership is] a conduit for getting things done...it is very much about relationships...it’s all about individuals.” (D3)

“Derby is a small city and relationships are more important than partnerships or legislation...you’d be amazed how much those personal relationships matter, even when you’ve got policy and governance, they still matter.” (D11)

“It’s the relationships...definitely...” (D12)

But responses in other dimensions – the degree of partnership autonomy and service integration - suggest that structure does play an important role. It is significant that respondents do not *overtly* see structure as vital.

There was broad agreement among interviewees that agency (i.e. individual relationships and personalities) was more significant than structure. Relationships between key players in senior positions helped to shape partnership direction and momentum; relationships at ‘ground level’ aided operational co-operation.

There was ambivalence between structure creating artificial barriers, and structure imposing necessary meaning and frameworks. For some, the gaps are a source of anxiety and potential ad-hoc individualism; for others, a welcome flexibility that enables things to get done.

This suggests that, rather than structure and agency competing for influence at all stages, each has a crucial role for network governance at different times. Structure is an important starting point: it dictates channels, priorities and means of getting work

established. This is true of new ventures and innovations, as well. Once work is established, personal relationships (agency) come to the fore; they allow smooth running and subsequent development.

Another aspect of structure is one that has been underplayed by commentators: the physical structure of co-locating staff and services. This is emphasised under other dimensions, but it can be stated here that physical co-location is a crucial structural element: it speeds up communication, develops interdependence, fosters network identity, and allows the network to evolve.

Structure places a context around PSE development: it demonstrates the limits imposed by government. Structures that dictate boundaries of power and influence also clarify what government expects of public servants' behaviour. In Derby the structure initially militated against PSE, by implying the partnership should be an implementation arm of government. The partnership itself has altered structures (as far as possible), and this has given room for a developing PSE. In agency, the partnership has created a tight network allowing a shared ethos, based on shared experience, and common purpose and environment.

The next section begins looking at the discussion area of separation from government, and the extent to which the CSP represents a network with genuine trust and devolved authority from government.

## Network Governance: Discussion Area 2 Separation from government

<i>Discussion heading</i>	<i>Dimension</i>
Agency vs structure	Agency vs structure
<b>Separation from government</b>	<b>Autonomy</b> <b>Centralisation</b> <b>Tiers of government</b> <b>Trust</b>
Network dynamics	Innovation Interdependence Openness Resources
Governance and NPM	Governance and NPM

***Dimension 2 autonomy: Network governance demonstrates a high degree of autonomy from government in setting and enacting policy.***

A key issue for network governance is the degree of autonomy it is granted, or acquires. Commentators (Damgaard 2006) argue that a network subject to overt involvement from government ceases to be a network, and becomes a ‘hierarchy in disguise’: i.e. replacing a formal hierarchy with a more subtle one. A true network should be, to a great degree, self-sustaining, self-governing, identifying its own priorities and solutions (e.g. Goss 2001, Stoker 2004, Entwistle *et al* 2007).

Most interviewees felt considerable central control of their work, priorities and resources; this lack of autonomy expressed itself in three ways. Firstly, the majority of performance indicators and measures were decided by central agencies rather than local conditions:

“sometimes you do have a sense of powerlessness in terms of what you actually do; part of it is central government, part of it has been the culture here...” (D2)

“we are very, very prescribed...we’re possibly the most statutory aspect of the CSP...” (D14)

Sometimes, national indicators could be accommodated within local needs:

“Generally the targets that are included within [the PCT] or the LAA are fairly broad ...and they don’t conflict with what we are already doing. Our local targets are based on our needs assessment...they are milestones to our wider targets...so they don’t conflict.” (D8)

Secondly, there was heavy central control and interference in other ways such as audit and inspection, or funding mechanisms and requirements. For example:

“What we do is in statute, it is set and determined by central government...since 1997...primarily what we do is governed...this is a pot of money, this is what you do, this is how you deliver in terms of performance...Central government decide what, and predominantly how, and when, and we have to perform against that.” (D4)

Different agencies could pursue different (sometimes counter-) agendas: performance regimes could create perverse incentives for agencies that were supposedly in partnership.

Thirdly, there was the focus on process, not outcomes. There was a dichotomy between broad-based outcome aims, and narrower process-based performance measurement. There was a lack of longer-term targets for overall societal impact (e.g. recidivism rates):

“In terms of [Communities and Local Government department] it’s more about the process we’re going through...it’s not so much have you achieved the final score. That may change this year.” (D12)

“We must have sixty measures on our performance targets and all of them are output measures...reducing re-offending was only put into the targets last year...if you said... ‘that’s our key priority, that’s what we’re here to do’ I think that would fit with a lot of what they believe...but if you say ‘reducing re-offending is your priority, but so are these other sixty output-related targets’ then you’re on a hiding to nothing.” (D18)

Audit and inspection was often based around compliance: counting what could be measured, with little context or focus on outcome. Some felt the audit regime was generally supportive, and offered examples of best practice from elsewhere. For some the majority of their targets and measures were relevant to local conditions, with little in the way of central direction or control.

The feeling of central direction was higher for senior managers (who were closer to the direction process), and for agencies led by the Home Office (especially youth justice work). Part of the issue was central control that was process-led: requirements, accountabilities and performance targets were about physically achieving a process, reflecting short-termism and interest in ‘what could be measured’.

For network governance, the lack of trust and autonomy from government limits the development of a true network. There is limited capacity for innovation; instead structures, policies and even processes are prescribed by government.

For PSE, the lack of autonomy pushes against PSE, which requires trust and local flexibility. When government dictates what is done, and how it is done, and follows this approach from policy development to audit, PSE cannot be enhanced.

Alongside the question of autonomy, is the degree of centralisation of power, authority, finance and resources, which is considered in the next section.

**Dimension 3 centralisation: Network governance demonstrates a clear departure from governance arrangements that reflect hierarchical control from a central government.**

This dimension is closely linked to autonomy – it looks at issues of control and ownership (e.g. Stoker 2004, Entwistle *et al* 2007, Kokx & van Kempen 2010). It asks about whether the CSP is actually developing policy, processes and priorities by itself. If much is disseminated from the centre, the CSP is not a true network but merely transmitting hierarchical control (Damgaard 2006, Entwistle *et al* 2007, Stoker 2011).

Central control was firm and significant. Government used funding criteria rather than direct edict; there were ‘strings attached’ about who could spend and under what circumstances; sometimes spent by an overarching agency not a local one. Central government had ways of ensuring that the processes, systems and structures for service delivery reflected their wishes: audit and inspection reflected compliance against centrally-decided criteria and priorities, and centrally-directed processes for achieving them.

Central government controlled many activities:

“sometimes you do have a sense of powerlessness in terms of what you actually do; part of it is central government, part of it has been the culture here...” (D2)

“Central government decide what, and predominantly how, and when, and we have to perform against that.” (D4)

Other examples included funding identified nationally, fed down to local level with expectations that it would be ring-fenced for prescribed processes; using national aims, but attempting to ‘add value’ at a local level; or targets based around national averages, with difficulties when translating to local circumstances.

Some believed their work was driven by wider, societal issues and not by central government policy – problems such as social inequality, illegal immigration and gang activity were being tackled, even when not overtly covered by policy. The majority of work was, they felt, generated by local factors:



“We tell them what we think, we have some aspiration, the NTA [National Treatment Agency] agree...and then that filters up and there’s never any challenge.” (D11)

Overall, while many explicitly referred to central control and direction, some felt the organisational size of the partnership, and the skills base within it, had allowed programmes to be set up without explicit central requirement – i.e. the partnership had ‘critical mass’ that allowed it to pursue some local projects, without neglecting the contribution to national work.

The degree of central prescription limits how much the partnership fulfils theoretical notions of networks. However, an interesting dynamic in Derby City finds the size and degree of co-location of the partnership is allowing it to push against centralisation, and work around central prescription. This is further explored in subsequent dimensions.

Centralisation (like the lack of autonomy) works against PSE, by limiting a public servant’s freedom, and encouraging narrow and short-term focus on what is ordained and measured. But the partnership’s size and structure may allow opportunities to work around these boundaries, and encourage local innovation and ownership instead.

The question of how the ‘layering’ of government levels affects the partnership is considered in the next section

***Dimension 9 tiers of government: Network governance is impacted upon by the extent, nature and impact of government structures and layers.***

Derby City has several layers of local government within the area and no regional government. This raises the question of whether a certain structure of government give a network more autonomy, or less (Newman 2001, Goss 2002, Damgaard 2006)?

Derby City was seen by many interviewees as a ‘good size’ i.e. sufficiently large for economies of scale and justifiable resources, but small enough for personal relationships to allow co-operation:

“Most councillors think that everywhere probably has a CSP set up something like ours with one physical location.” (D16)

“ [The partnership is] quite a powerful organisation in the city because of the nature of the city – because it’s a unitary authority, because of the environment.” (D18)

When partnership priorities were set nationally, which government department controlled which activity became crucial:

“What we do is in statute, it is set and determined by central government...since 1997...primarily what we do is governed...this is a pot of money, this is what you do, this is how you deliver in terms of performance. Central government decide what, and predominantly how, and when, and we have to perform against that.” (D4)

Such a situation reduced accountability, as significant changes were decided by central government in London, not locally. Equally, centralisation of resources in Derby City had been to the detriment of the rest of the county of Derbyshire:

“In reality it [being in a CSP] probably bears no resemblance in terms of reality to those 400 people out there [county-wide staff] in the county...it means very little to them. If you get people onside in Derby you can make progress a lot quicker than you can in the county. It’s hugely difficult to deal with more than one layer...we can set up systems with one local authority, but if you happen to live in another authority area, you get a different service...”(D18)

There was criticism of prescriptive and uncoordinated national government, producing performance targets and priorities that cut across each other. East Midlands Government Office played no significant role, meaning direct accountability from Derby City to Westminster departments. Derby City’s structure had produced relatively co-terminous boundaries for agencies, and economies of scale without diluting the benefits of personal relationships.

The partnership is pushing against strains imposed by tiers of government. A unitary authority working directly to government departments in London does not allow a regional context, and discourages a localised response consistent with network governance. The partnership pushes against this, using its economies of scale and relative cohesion as a quasi-organisation. The partnership wants to be more of a network than current governance structure allows.

The absence of a layer between London and Derby works against a PSE. Dictating policy and process from London means a centralised one-size-fits-all approach, and invites assumption that London is doing the longer-term and wider thinking associated with a PSE.

These three sections have focused on the degree of control exercised by government on the partnership. The next section completes the view of government-network relations, by assessing the degree of trust around the partnership's operations.

***Dimension 10 trust: Network governance demonstrates a high degree of trust between network members, and trust of the network by government. Network governance reflects the extent to which work operates on trust between network members, rather than contracts, SLAs, etc.***

One criterion of network governance is interdependence and trust among members (Kooiman 2003). This trust is preferred to contractual terms, memoranda of understanding, or contracts (Rhodes 1996, Ansell & Gash 2008). In network governance, partner organisations should have trusting working relationships; the degree of trust indicates how much network governance is embedded as the governance system.

Some felt that trust was high because there were so many reciprocal relationships:

“Culture dictates the systems but ultimately it's down to personalities...ultimately it goes on through relationships” (D1)

“Derby is a small city and relationships are more important than Partnerships or legislation...you’d be amazed how much those personal relationships matter, even when you’ve got policy and governance, they still matter.” (D11)

Others mentioned co-location; for some it was largely a question of leadership, and this had improved of late:

“I think there was a ‘theory X’ in that senior management mistrusted workers, thought they were work-shy...as a result of that, there was this mistrust of the senior management team...very ‘theory Y’ now.” (D11)

Others cited improved trust relationships - less written down in a formal, local authority style; more taken on trust. But for some significant political in-fighting remained, which hindered trust:

“You’ve got to learn to work with it...it can be a positive that it’s not just a nebulous partnership...but it works both ways, to some extent we saw the other side of it – if you get on the wrong side of the CSP you are almost locked out, because of its power and because of its status as an entity in itself...” (D18)

Trust reduced when commissioning became involved - both sides relied on contractual terms, and some partnership structures actually reduced trust:

“People are still in their own little silos...everyone’s got their own agenda and results that they want to achieve.” (D7)

For network governance, two forms of trust are critical here. Firstly, there is limited trust from government – exemplified by central prescription – which hinders true network governance. Secondly, there is the interdependence between partnership members – this is strong in many areas and developing through co-location. The partnership is evolving an identity and sense of shared goals, which will enhance network governance.

PSE is enhanced where public servants share a common aim, and work on local solutions to local issues. PSE is damaged by a central government dictating terms, and enforcing centrally-designed policies and processes. This is evidenced most particularly when central government dictated a contractual setting to a relationship, or imposed terms and conditions.

This completes the four dimensions looking at government and the network. The next discussion area focuses on the internal workings of the network itself, beginning with innovation

## Network Governance: Discussion Area 3 Network Dynamics

<i>Discussion heading</i>	<i>Dimension</i>
Agency vs structure	Agency vs structure
Separation from government	Autonomy Centralisation Tiers of government Trust
<b>Network dynamics</b>	<b>Innovation</b> <b>Interdependence</b> <b>Openness</b> <b>Resources</b>
Governance and NPM	Governance and NPM

**Dimension 4 innovation:** *Network governance demonstrates significant levels of innovation in designing and carrying out policy. Network governance reflects the extent to which new activity exists only because of action by the network.*

There is a theoretical view that networks demonstrate status as a true network by a) harnessing the talent pool within the network, thus showing group dynamics are operating b) use these to develop new policies and ideas independent of central government (Hendricks & Topps 2005). This level of autonomy and local response is expected of genuine network governance (Damgaard 2006). Hierarchical control, however, would make the network more concerned about implementing central ideas and policies.

Some felt their work was unaffected by partnership status – because their work was heavily dictated centrally, or because it ran independent of national policy changes:

“I don’t think being in the partnership has any relevance to what we do...”  
(D2)

“I don’t think any of it exists because the partnership is there. If the partnership wasn’t here it would be in the local authority or the police or the Chief Executive’s office.” (D5)

“I think that 100% we don’t need the partnership; we would be able to run the work without being part of the organisation.” (D7)

“I have to work in a partnership because I can’t work elsewhere. As to added value...I find small value in being here.” (D11)

Some saw more generalised innovation - partnership provided a changed focus, perspective or structure that fostered innovation; or the partnership’s existence was a pre-requisite for certain changes:

“the effectiveness and delivery of the CSP is greater than the sum of its funding and its parts.” (D6)

“I think the partnership allows a number of agendas to be integrated together, which probably would be otherwise dealt with separately...” (D8)

“I don’t think we’d have got where we are trying to deliver it from within the authority...” (D12)

“Some of it can only be done because it’s in the partnership, because of the unique nature of where we are and the way that...the funds are managed for us...it needs that sort of insider knowledge...” (D13)

“...I just think that being part of this enhances some of the service delivery and targeting of particular communities...it adds value...” (D14)

“If the CSP didn’t exist we wouldn’t have those staff, because they’re part of the partnership...if we didn’t have my team that work...they’d possibly try to deliver it through the voluntary sector...we would struggle if we weren’t here...”(D15)

“If we had all the individual agencies they wouldn’t do it individually, not in the same way... I don’t think that individual partners would have the time or the impetus to go to each of those organisations individually and say, ‘can you tell us, can you tell us’.” (D17)

Some suggested without a partnership there would not be the same drive or passion:

“We would lose some of the things that we’ve got...I don’t fear this as much as before.” (D10)

Others felt the partnership undermined and stifled innovation - partnership implied a lack of personal ownership of issues or solutions. Partnership size meant that individuals were able to avoid direct responsibility; instead, it encouraged a mentality that ‘someone else is responsible for that’ (and so would provide solutions), and a feeling that:

“...you can hide in a partnership” (D11)

Respondents mentioned changes in focus, perspective, structure and process from the national norm; reflecting either local considerations, or local opportunities from being a co-located quasi-organisation. For example creating a domestic violence unit, while fitting with national developments, was an opportunity to bring previously-disparate agencies and voluntary organisations together under one roof. Many felt the existence of the partnership fostered this – allowing opportunities for innovation that would have escaped individual organisations working in isolation.

For network governance, innovation hinges on two aspects – government direction, and critical mass. Most government departments continue to dictate from the centre, so that partnership is not a network but a delivery arm of pre-decided policy. However, critical mass gives the partnership an opportunity to innovate: it has sufficient resources and co-location to allow new ideas to develop.

Government edict limits PSE by implying a lack of the trust and autonomy that PSE needs. However, the partnership is innovating where it can, using organic growth of new ideas to support the public interest: this is evidence of PSE.

A second facet of the network’s internal dynamics is the degree of interdependence between its members. This is considered in the next section



**Dimension 5 interdependence: Network governance demonstrates a high degree of interdependence between network members. Network governance reflects the extent to which network members are intertwined or could manage without each other.**

One criterion for network governance is the degree of interdependence between members (Pierre & Peters 2000, Kooiman 2003). ‘Interdependence’ relates to group dynamics, asymmetric power relationships within it, and ease of entry and exit. Effective network governance would show high interdependence (Bevir & Rhodes 2003) rather than asymmetry, or members operating semi-autonomously.

Some identified interdependence stemming from the partnership’s ability to give ‘added value’ compared to individual agencies:

“the effectiveness and delivery of the CSP is greater than the sum of its funding and its parts.” (D6)

Others felt interdependence was forced on partners by centralised structural or funding conditions – a deliberate policy decision by government, and so imposed rather than an outcome of partnership co-operation. This sense of imposition connects to concerns about prescriptive funding or imposed structures:

“There are elements of the partnership - for instance, drug and alcohol commissioning, etc- that if there wasn’t that commitment to provision...that would have a significant impact upon the work that we can do...the risk is it wouldn’t be as sustainable or robust...we wouldn’t have the resilience...we could do it, but it wouldn’t be very sustainable...the risk would be that if things broke down, there wouldn’t be the back-up of being part of a wider CSP.”(D18)

In some work there was total interdependence: the work was impossible without the partnership:

“If the CSP didn’t exist we wouldn’t have those staff, because they’re part of the partnership...” (D15)

Another view was that partnership working created interdependence, by altering the prevailing culture and mind set of partnership members. However, some saw no evidence of interdependence:

“People are still in their own little silos...everyone’s got their own agenda and results that they want to achieve.” (D7)

It was also felt that any interdependence was merely an attempt at improved efficiency, rather than genuine shared culture or vision:

“There is a cost to this partnership being an organisational partnership...if we don’t do it, it would still need doing somewhere else, but could it be done cheaper?” (D4)

Some argued the partnership hindered interdependence, by allowing an abrogation of responsibility or ownership of issues: dependence was a reliance on others to be responsible, not a sharing of responsibility.

The majority view was that work was becoming more interdependent, for three reasons. Firstly, there were greater opportunities when resources and knowledge were pooled – a fledgling sense of ‘gestalt’ emerged here. Secondly, partnership was being pushed towards interdependence by government – some work was difficult unless conducted by several agencies working together. Thirdly, a sense that the existence of the partnership created a slightly different culture; encouraging interdependence through co-location, shared budget streams and support resources.

The partnership displays high (and increasing) levels of interdependence among members. This is partly caused by central direction (of policy and funding) from government. Partly it is due to internal factors – leadership, co-location, gradual emergence of a prevailing culture.

Interdependence is a mixed blessing. It offers opportunities for public servants to demonstrate PSE, allowing innovation and freedom from restrictions. Alternatively, it

might indicate an internal focus of partners locked into mutual processes that benefit them rather than a wider public good; more of a ‘public sector ethos’.

Part of the dynamics of a network – and a potential criticism of it – lies in the degree of openness exhibited by the network as an entity. The next section explores this dimension.

***Dimension 7 openness: Network governance demonstrates a coherent system, which still allows entry and exit as part of its on-going dynamic. Network governance reflects the extent to which the network is an open or closed system for new entrants.***

One attribute of network governance is ease of entry and exit (Pierre & Peters 2000, Howlett 2002). An infusion of new blood can influence the dynamics of a network, and allow a network to change in a static environment. It introduces fresh impetus, skills, ideas and resources; and impacts on existing power balances between members. It also impinges upon network dynamics of power, forms of communication, and formality in arrangements (Damgaard 2006, Entwistle et al 2007).

The partnership had grown over a decade, indicating it was capable of assimilating new groups. Physical co-location of the partnership aided integration of those joining: it provided additional structures, more stable and long-term finances, and synergy:

“I don’t think we’d have got where we are trying to deliver it from within the authority...” (D12)

I just think that being part of this enhances some of the service delivery and targeting of particular communities...it adds value but we would still have to deliver the core stuff.” (D14)

“If the CSP didn’t exist we wouldn’t have those staff, because they’re part of the partnership... if the partnership wasn’t here we wouldn’t have the [unit]...” (D15)

But joining the partnership affected other relationships, by moving away from previous connections (whether to other agencies in the area, or to government departments). Joining the partnership was also a politically-charged action:

“Now, the partnership is a very exposed vehicle...what we physically do are the right things...but it means nothing at the moment because the councillors don’t like it...the new chief executive will seek to make this more of a council thing.” (D9)

Leaving the partnership also had repercussions. Some felt that new partners continued to work within their own previous silos:

“People are still in their own little silos...everyone’s got their own agenda and results that they want to achieve.” (D7)

Some agencies joined or left the partnership for local reasons, rather than national statute. Membership was broad and fluid, sometimes politically-motivated and politically-charged. For example the location of neighbourhood managers (both physically and in management structure) over the previous decade had been a tug-of-war between local authority and partnership, almost a ‘flagship’ of wider control of the public safety agenda. The partnership offered support structures and mechanisms, longer-term and stable funding in return for membership. Partners demonstrably had more to gain by joining than remaining outside the partnership. Part of this openness was the result of co-location making it quicker and easier to integrate.

The impact of existing support structures is important for network governance. Notwithstanding cultural issues and innate conservatism among members; support structures allowed quick and effective integration of new members. The physical and practical issues of joining a network have been underplayed by theory: this case study shows they are important.

For PSE, openness indicates a willingness to put aside narrow interests, for a greater benefit. An open partnership is one more likely to foster PSE.

The final aspect of network dynamics to be explored is resources. Networks must share resources, and the degree to which they can do so successfully is explored in the next section.

**Dimension 8 Governance – resources: *Network governance demonstrates a system in which network members negotiate or co-operate over resources.***

In public service control and division of resources are key issues; almost a proxy for power and influence (Stoker 1998, Kokx & van Kempen 2010) A strong network would be given full responsibility for spending its' own budget. A weaker network would see the budget shared out according to central government edict, and subject to stringent controls and conditions. The degree of co-operation within the network on assigning resources also indicates some of the dynamics and relative power between members (Kooiman 2003, Gains 2004).

The partnership structure allowed a less-politicised discussion of resources, de-personalising issues and allowing consensus on overall priorities:

“a conduit for getting things done...it is very much about relationships...it's all about individuals.” (D3)

This de-politicising was not simply a reduction in party political argument, but also reducing debate around who controlled, 'owned' or received resources. Overt politics are reduced, but the nature of the political element changes. This feeds into arguments about who receives credit for successful work – control of resources being a key factor in taking credit.

The evidence strongly demonstrated that the partnership gave better access to specialists and experts, allowing resources to be used more effectively. Support from partnership mechanisms and degree of scrutiny within the partnership, led to more robust and thoughtful commissioning compared to individual agencies. The partnership also helped gain and maintain security of resources:

“You could argue that if they gave us the money we could provide the service...to some extent...a lot of operational staff would [argue they could buy a better service]...the risk is it wouldn't be as sustainable or robust...we wouldn't have the resilience...we could do it, but it wouldn't

be very sustainable...the risk would be that if things broke down, there wouldn't be the back-up of being part of a wider CSP.” (D18)

Difficulties around resources remained: sometimes the partnership reduced access to certain funding, as agencies were within the ‘umbrella’ of the partnership, and government saw the overall partnership as well-funded. Funding to partnerships was often so restricted it became counter-productive, and might have been more flexible for a stand-alone agency. The ‘strings’ attached to partnership funding hindered implementation; funding to an individual agency often came with fewer caveats.

Those policy areas where commissioning was involved often had a more robust discussion: the resulting decision was more carefully weighed and evidenced, suggesting a different balance once actual cash (not opportunity cost) is involved. Secondly, the nature of the partnership in Derby City, with support mechanisms and access to specialists, allowed better use to be made of resources; it reduces conflict over resources by enabling agencies to get more for their money. Thirdly, examples were cited (e.g. domestic violence unit, neighbourhood teams) of projects initiated and/or supported because the partnership offered continuity of funding, for the timespan needed to demonstrate the project's worth.

There were clear examples of co-operation on resources, which would have been unlikely from individual, discrete agencies. The degree of pooling, enhanced negotiation processes, and a ‘gestalt’ approach yielding new spending opportunities, all suggest the benefits of resources managed by network governance.

This use of ‘gestalt’ indicated a willingness to subsume individual or political issues, for greater overall gain – a key element of PSE. However, the debate around ‘who takes credit’ suggests political issues may be redirected, rather than disappearing.

This concludes the discussion area of network dynamics. The next discussion area looks specifically at the impact of NPM on network behaviour – has it retained a strong influence, or is this now changing?

## Network Governance: Discussion Area 4 Governance and NPM

<i>Discussion heading</i>	<i>Dimension</i>
Agency vs structure	Agency vs structure
Separation from government	Autonomy Centralisation Tiers of government Trust
Network dynamics	Innovation Interdependence Openness Resources
<b>Governance and NPM</b>	<b>Governance and NPM</b>

**Dimension 6 NPM structures:** *Network governance is impacted by the extent to which the network represents a demonstrable shift in governance, or continues with previous governance structures and processes*

The dimension looks at how the partnership represents a change from previous, NPM-style governance (Goss 2001, Newman 2001, Maesschalk 2003). If large vestiges of NPM remain, it implies the network is at best nascent; at worst, limited. How much NPM-style governance remains reflects on the willingness/ability both of the network to develop, and government to let it do so (Bevir & Rhodes 2003, McDonough 2006).

Most felt there were significant levels of NPM-style governance from central government. These included too many performance indicators, across too many work areas, micro-managing local work from London in ways that varied from unhelpful, to counter-productive:

“Central government decide what, and predominantly how, and when, and we have to perform against that. Home Office agendas are very micro-managed, very centrally set in terms of targets, performance, monitoring...we need a more mature relationship” (D4)

“we are very, very prescribed...we’re possibly the most statutory aspect of the CSP...”(D14)

Some felt the performance measures themselves were contradictory, and led to perverse incentives. For example, targets of reduction cut across targets of prevention; an upward tick in figures could be regarded as a failure (rising problem) or success (rising awareness of an issue). Other problems lay in the nature and extent of audit and inspection – felt to be prescriptive and process-oriented, uninterested in at broader societal outcomes:

“In terms of CLG it’s more about the process we’re going through...it’s not so much have you achieved the final score. That may change this year...” (D12)

“We must have sixty measures on our performance targets and all of them are output measures...reducing re-offending was only put into the targets last year.” (D18)

This view of audit was not universal: some felt in their field the audit regime was light-touch and based on outcomes or outputs:

“We tell them what we think, we have some aspiration, the NTA agree...and then that filters up and there’s never any challenge...generally I’d say they are more of a help than a hindrance, and they’ve got a very soft touch”. (D11)

Without an intervening layer of regional government, the partnership felt the direct intervention and prescription of central government. Few performance indicators were outcome-based, preferring to fix on measurable inputs or outputs; the performance measurement system and audit were prescriptive, paying insufficient attention to local context, and overly-concerned with processes. There was insufficient strategic planning



of the overall performance management structure: for example, one measure may encourage prevention of crime, but another stressed detection or processing of offenders.

For network governance, this implies that government has not relinquished central control: too many performance indicators, tight audits, and focus on processes and outputs. This has forced the partnership into implementing national policy and process as directed; and trying to find 'gaps' in coverage, to innovate and develop according to local need. The dual role cuts across theoretical notions of strong network governance.

Strong NPM militates against PSE. It undermines trust, local responsiveness (by dictating work centrally), autonomy, innovation, and the wider and longer-term thinking required to work for the greater public interest.

This section concludes the look at NPM and network governance, and is the last of the ten dimensions of network governance. Further analysis of these dimensions comes in Chapters Eight and Nine.

The next section begins the evidence on PSE, starting with the discussion area of public interest. This discussion area has three dimensions – the first is accountability.

## Public Service Ethos: Discussion Area 5 Public interest

<i>Discussion area</i>	<i>Dimension</i>
<b>Public interest</b>	<b>Accountability</b> <b>Public interest</b> <b>Wider and longer thinking</b>
Impact of governance	Degree of trust Impact of NPM processes Role of commissioning/contractual work
Impact of organisation	Socialization vs self-selection Cultural-specific Impact of working level Outcomes/processes/traits Variance
Impact of individual	Loyalty Motivation Personal values
Ethos comparison	vs voluntary sector vs public sector ethos

**Dimension 11 accountability:** *a PSE is demonstrated by an understanding of the public interest, as well as direct accountability for actions taken on behalf of the public. Public servants are accountable to the public for the underlying principles of action, as well as the actions themselves.*

Previous definitions of PSE spoke of a patrician ‘we know best’ attitude from public servants, towards the best interests of a group or society (Pratchett & Wingfield 1996, O’Toole 2006, Haqle 2007). The dimension looks for evidence of this approach, and how

accountability for decisions and actions is displayed. In examining the existence – or otherwise – of a patrician approach, we can detect any changes in the substance of PSE, or demonstrate how it has changed (Hill & Hupe 2007, Grimshaw et al 2008).

Some interviewees felt their priorities were driven by public demand, albeit at a macro-level via public surveys:

“it’s about public perception of what you do”(D1)

although relying on public perception risked focusing on public relations too much:

“it is like putting up fake CCTV cameras.” (D1)

Others felt their work was directed either top-down by government, or by internally-decided priorities which may (or may not) reflect public concerns:

“What we do is in statute, it is set and determined by central government...since 1997...primarily what we do is governed...this is a pot of money, this is what you do, this is how you deliver in terms of performance. Central government decide what, and predominantly how, and when, and we have to perform against that.”(D4)

The idea that public services should be driven by public concerns was challenged:

“This is where public services have made a massive blunder – the notion of customers. Yeah, you need good customer services...but we don’t deliver services to customers...they aren’t our customers, there’s no choice...local public services are on really dodgy ground with this notion of ‘we can deliver services to individuals’. It’s called community safety because it’s about the safety of the community. We inherently cannot be customer-focused because people can’t request individual services...it’s not an individual relationship...it’s about our citizens, your community, your role as a citizen.” (D4)

Some felt the partnership downplayed or even ignored accountability:

“an inherent democratic deficit, where the key people could have helped close that gap and haven’t been keen to do so...if you keep people at arm’s length you’re not making a rod for your own back...[in the future] there is bound to be more structured engagement between Scrutiny and the CSP...if we hadn’t got that legislative change it would be impossible to predict whether [there would be a change] in terms of scrutiny.” (D16)

or cited a lack of previous local authority accountability:

“I’m the expert, look at these letters after my name, I’ll decide what’s right...” (D10)

There was a pressing accountability issue in Derby City which was exemplified by querying whether the partnership had, through expansion, become a *de facto* organisation. If so, then a clear accountability process with partners and the public was missing. The branding of the partnership, sharing credit and blame, and relationships with partner organisations: all became blurred and increasingly difficult to reconcile. It goes to the heart of the accountability debate. There was concern that, if the partnership became an organisation, it did so organically and stealthily, without many checks and balances normally associated with creating an organisation.

Branding and credit-taking were important, with suggestions that partner organisations needed to take responsibility:

“We link to all of our partners on our website but none of them link to us on theirs – is that our fault for branding ourselves well or their fault for disassociating themselves with what we do? It’s easy to blame the partnership for stealing our thunder – well, don’t leave it lying around! We are the easy target, and if I was them [partner organisations] I’d be doing exactly the same thing.” (D17)

Overall, the branding issue was a touchstone for the wider issue of the partnership becoming an organisational entity:

“The culture of the partnership, confidentially, has been one of arrogance...from the way that it’s been managed...because we’ve had a separate branding...the partnership taking too much credit for other people’s work.” (D3)

If the partnership was not an organisation it had, on occasions, moved close to such a definition:

“we are not an entity, we are the sum of every partner. We are underwritten, because of the statutory framework that the local authority has, to work in partnership.” (D9)

“...I think it’s a partnership, the sum of its parts. It’s essential that we portray ourselves in that manner so that stakeholder organisations see added value.” It tried to grow, it was almost like The Blob in the film...it had 200 staff...it just seemed to grow, opportunistically usurp or coalesce with other organisations...that was a mistake, it sent the wrong messages, a grasping message.” (D11)

“We’re not really an organisation, are we?...legally we’re not...I work at the partnership...I don’t think there’s any clear understanding across the partnership of how people feel about that...I think it varies according to the type of work, possibly the mentality within that smaller team or unit.” (D15)

Such ambivalence, or duality, in partnership identity is itself an issue: causing complications in management, organisational culture, or perceptions of others. Some felt uneasy at being a quasi-organisation; others saw it as inevitable and not undesirable. Such juxtapositions imply cultural confusion about what the partnership is and should become; and the type of accountability deemed appropriate for such an ‘organisation’.

Many described the partnership as a *de facto* organisation: this has implications for accountability. The situation had developed organically, partially from the personality of the partnership director. But becoming an organisation was highly significant:

“...historically that’s how it’s evolved and promoted...we shouldn’t be – we’re one part of the council and should have the council identity in many respects...the CSP has morphed into something that has its own identity...” (D8)

“...it’s like a stand-alone organisation...[the] partnership was getting very good at getting praise, lots of things happening...that are visible...pretty good press coverage...there was a perception that ‘that money, that you’re getting all the praise for, is actually council money’.” (D10)

“...[the partnership’s own HR, finance and communications staff] because all of those things scream ‘organisation’...” (D12)

“I do feel it’s an organisation...because the host agencies let us be, in a way...it’s only because we need to meet the partners’ agendas...that we come together as a group. But therefore, because we come together in this way, let’s try to use an organisation feel to drive things through where we can.” (D13)

...this has been questioned recently and criticised...you want to have an identity and [the director] is exploring whether you should have that level of profile around the CSP...at one point there was no differentiation around each service – everything had to be the CSP...” (D14)

“I think it’s more than the sum of its parts...it’s not a body corporate in law, but it is a statutory requirement in law to have a Crime and Disorder Partnership...Derby City CSP is not just a crime reduction partnership by another name; it is a statutory partnership with other things bolted onto it...It doesn’t employ anyone as such, it can’t be sued...you could certainly say it’s an organisation.” (D16)

“Legally no, actually yes. Everyone here feels like they work for the partners, but they do that through the CSP...” (D17)

“Derby CSP has had a culture over the years...it has almost become a delivery organisation in itself...because it has this responsibility for delivery, it still has ...the elements of the structure of an organisation that

lends itself to delivery... it is an organisation because it has those elements of delivery, and quite significant elements of delivery...and quite a powerful organisation in the city because of the nature of the city..." (D18)

Overall, so many performance criteria were driven by central government, it was felt there was relatively little accountability to be had: the partnership was (in accountability terms) more responsible to government than to local people. This is discussed further in Chapters Eight and Nine.

In addition, the partnership has become less accountable than the partner organisations. The public were more familiar with individual organisations than with partnership; accountability mechanisms and structures were deeper-rooted for those organisations; there was a belief that, provided the partnership delivered results, it was under less overt pressure to demonstrate how it had achieved those results.

These views provide a complex picture for network governance. Accountability was limited - by central government prescription of policy; by development of the partnership into a quasi-organisation; by public confusion over who was the partnership and who was (for example) the council; exacerbated by performance indicators stressing public perception of performance.

However, highly localised accountability was enhanced by initiatives such as neighbourhood teams, and by a commitment from many to, at the very least, take the public with them. This illustrates how perceptions of accountability have altered – it is about explaining and providing communication forums, as much as asking the public prior to taking action.

PSE is particularly affected by confusion and debate about credit-taking. Government has created a situation where partners exhorted to co-operate have a vested interest in competing for the public's appreciation. PSE is undermined by the focus moving to the short term and expedient, not long-term societal benefit.

The next section examines the dimension of public interest itself – who defines it, and the part it plays in shaping service delivery

**Dimension 21 public interest: a PSE is demonstrated by a commitment to uncovering and supporting the public interest. A PSE is visible in how this interest is decided upon, and the balance between individual and group/societal needs.**

The ‘public interest’ is an intrinsic part of PSE; the PSE is defined partly by how individuals and organisations act in the public interest, even where this conflicts with convenience, personal benefit, or short-term gains. (Farnham & Horton 1996, Pratchett & Wingfield 1996, Public Administration Committee 2002, McDonough 2006, Park *et al* 2008). The public interest is a cornerstone of PSE (Moore 2000, Smith 2004, O’Toole 2006, DuGay 2008, Kim & Vandenabeele 2009, Elcock 2011). Definitions of the public interest focus on balancing needs, wishes and prioritisation between individual and society/community (Farnham and Horton 1996, Public Administration Committee 2002, McDonough 2006). The dimension assesses how the public interest is formulated and shaped; and how competing interests of individual and wider society inform the public interest.

Some suggested a democratic deficit with the partnership was counter to the public interest:

“an inherent democratic deficit, where the key people could have helped close that gap and haven’t been keen to do so...if you keep people at arm’s length you’re not making a rod for your own back...” (D16)

The partnership tried to address this deficit, not by creating long-term processes but instead by delivering first, then ‘backfilling’ consultation and accountability.

For some the partnership’s decision on what was in the public interest was a form of *fait accompli*:

“We tell them [government] what we think, we have some aspiration, the NTA agree...and then that filters up and there’s never any challenge.”  
(D11)



Perhaps balancing community and individual needs was inherently impossible. Some suggested that public services had to make an overt choice:

“This is where public services have made a massive blunder – the notion of customers. Yeah, you need good customer services...but we don’t deliver services to customers...they aren’t our customers, there’s no choice...local public services are on really dodgy ground with this notion of ‘we can deliver services to individuals’. It’s called community safety because it’s about the safety of the community. We inherently cannot be customer-focused because people can’t request individual services...it’s not an individual relationship...it’s about our citizens, your community, your role as a citizen.” (D4)

The concept of ‘public interest’ was mentioned specifically by only a handful of respondents. ***This is crucial*** – that within a public service environment almost no overt attention is paid to the public interest. The public interest was not prioritised because the partnership was not accountable on it – accountability was ‘back-filled’ by completing the process after the fact.

Like accountability, public interest feeds into network governance through network relations with the public. In Derby the quasi-organisational nature of the partnership has reduced accountability. But accountability is not a precondition of networks: the case study supports fears of networks becoming a closed group of professionals detached from the public they serve (Elcock 2011).

For PSE, implications are much sharper. Limited accountability denies channels or forums for developing views of what is in the public interest. Indeed, the aim of doing so is rarely articulated or followed through. Instead professional expertise at service delivery, and assumed public interest stemming from national government’s popular mandate, is deemed sufficient. The lack of discussion of public interest - or appropriate location for this debate - demonstrated in this research, suggests society-wide public interest is low on the list of priorities.

The third dimension under the 'public interest' discussion area is wider and longer thinking: the notion that the public interest requires a certain perspective to both appreciate and implement it. This is explored next.

***Dimension 26 wider and longer thinking: a PSE is demonstrated by consistent long-term thinking aimed at the wider public interest. A PSE is concerned with the extent of thinking beyond the short term, outside of job description or organisation, towards community and societal requirements.***

Within PSE is the desirability of thinking long-term not short-term, and thinking beyond job description and organisation, to community or societal issues (Shacar 2000, Hoggett 2006, DuGay 2008, Diefenbach 2009). The dimension seeks evidence that wider and longer-term thinking is occurring. Are public services within the partnership considering aspects beyond the partnership's immediate responsibilities, wider societal impact, or time frames longer than an electoral cycle?

There were few examples of such thinking. Respondents argued that the public reacts to immediate circumstances and basic figures, not underpinning philosophy or the long-term. This may be viewed as a remnant of patrician thinking. Consequently, service levels are dictated by resource availability, not a consistent long-term, broad philosophical approach.

Overall, few mentioned thinking outside of their own organisation or the partnership's role, although more strategic issues were beginning to be examined to understand cause-and-effect. Central government undermining local accountability seems to make wider thinking redundant.

For network governance, wider and longer thinking should occur within the network: this would be the source of expert thinking and experience, trusted by central government. Instead, there are few examples of such thinking - the network is not doing this because central government control prevents it.

As with the public interest, absence of convincing evidence of wider/longer thinking undermines the PSE. Responsibility has been abrogated and/or taken away: it is assumed to happen in central government, despite no overt evidence of this. Instead, it is ‘falling through the cracks’: not held at central government or local level. The consequences of this are fully explored in Chapters Eight and Nine.

This concludes the discussion area of public interest. The next three discussion areas move from a broad focus to a tight focus, in assessing the key influencers of PSE. The first of these is therefore the impact of governance; starting with a look at trust

## Public Service Ethos: Discussion Area 6 Impact of governance

<i>Discussion area</i>	<i>Dimension</i>
Public interest	Accountability Public interest Wider and longer thinking
<b>Impact of governance</b>	<b>Degree of trust</b> <b>Impact of NPM processes</b> <b>Role of commissioning/contractual work</b>
Impact of organisation	Socialization vs self-selection Cultural-specific Impact of working level Outcomes/processes/traits Variance
Impact of individual	Loyalty Motivation Personal values
Ethos comparison	vs voluntary sector vs public sector ethos

***Dimension 14 degree of trust: a PSE is demonstrated by the principle of vertical and horizontal trust between individuals and groups. The extent of reliance on contract or other forms of ‘proof’ of performance, and the degree of autonomy granted, will demonstrate the extent to which this dimension is visible and operational.***

High-trust relationships are taken by some (Plant 2003, O’Toole 2006) to indicate a vibrant PSE. Strong dependence on ‘proof’ of performance and contractual terms; focus on the job description or immediate remit of the individual (Lawton 2004); these are

mechanistic approaches that cut cross some tenets of PSE, such as public interest or wider thinking. The dimension assesses trust between CSP members, and what this implies for PSE

It was strikingly clear from the interviews that, overwhelmingly, interviewees had seen a decline in trust as an underpinning feature of PSE. The negative views expressed by many suggests, at best, a cynicism about trust; at worst a profound lack of trust in parts of the partnership. On the positive side, some felt current arrangements allowed for the primacy of personal relationships, hinging on trust and light audit trails:

“Culture dictates the systems but ultimately it’s down to personalities...ultimately it goes on through relationships” (D1)

“...a lot of it boils down to personal relationships...if you went through the true mechanics of the partnership...it’s not helpful being here...you’d be amazed how much those personal relationships matter, even when you’ve got policy and governance, they still matter.” (D11)

In-house services were seen as inherently more trust-oriented than outsourced services; the former had shared interests and common ground. This may be conservatism; however, it implies that PSE depends on shared values that are more difficult in a fragmented, legalistic setting. Partnership, with a flatter organisational map and short reporting lines, may be more trust-oriented:

“People don’t trust us so we won’t trust them...people think we’re motivated by money...that was pretty much a pervasive culture...I think there was a ‘theory X’ in that senior management mistrusted workers, thought they were work-shy...as a result of that, there was this mistrust of the senior management team...very ‘theory Y’ now.” (D11)

However, others highlighted the lack of trust demonstrated by fighting over resources. Political in-fighting suggests no consistent unifying philosophy, and no deep-rooted PSE:

“People are still in their own little silos...everyone’s got their own agenda and results that they want to achieve...every man for himself, to the detriment of service sometimes...” (D7)

Partnership structures could instead encourage distance between partners, or informal ‘workarounds’ to overcome structural barriers:

“You’ve got to learn to work with it...it can be a positive that it’s not just a nebulous partnership...but it works both ways, to some extent we saw the other side of it – if you get on the wrong side of the CSP you are almost locked out, because of its power and because of its status as an entity in itself...” (D18)

Commissioned services implied lower trust levels between commissioners and providers: they formalised what might otherwise be taken on trust. New legislation introduced more formal scrutiny (thus, less taken on good faith); government needs to trust partner members more openly:

“There is bound to be more structured engagement between Scrutiny and the CSP...if we hadn’t got that legislative change it would be impossible to predict whether [there would be a change] in terms of scrutiny.” (D16)

“...we need a more mature relationship [with government]” (D4)

Building trust within the partnership depended on personal relationships, although other relevant issues (more in-house resources and support, better management communication, shorter lines of responsibility, flatter structure) were also mentioned. The partnership still has stubborn trust issues - fighting over resources, inhibiting structures and working arrangements.

For network governance, the high levels of internal trust suggest a developing partnership identity and high levels of interdependence (reduced when services were commissioned not in-house). Trust from government was low, undermining network governance because government has not ‘let go’.

Trust levels from government are crucial to PSE. The inherent lack of trust (e.g. in audit processes, or ‘strings attached’ to funding) undermines a PSE – implying public servants cannot be relied upon; that a mechanistic approach is necessary and desirable; and that processes and structures must be dictated by central government.

The effect of governance will also be demonstrated by the degree to which NPM processes have affected, and/or continue to impact upon, the PSE. This is the next dimension

***Dimension 15 impact of NPM processes: a PSE will be demonstrated by adherence to overarching principles, albeit within prevailing governance systems. PSE will be affected by the way in which governance is enacted; in this instance, by NPM and network governance.***

New Public Management has been posited as an opposing philosophy and practical roadblock to a strong and robust PSE (Farnham and Horton 1996, Thompson 2006, Haque 2007, Elcock 2012). NPM requirements emphasise what can be measured and observed, produce short-term and limited thinking, impose targets and objectives from above, and reduce room for individual manoeuvre (Boyne 2002, Merali 2003, Lawton 2004, Plowden 2004, O’Toole 2006). Therefore, evidence of substantial NPM measures indicates a falling or struggling PSE. It is a zero-sum game in which greater NPM means less PSE for two reasons: first, that the dominant philosophy driving services is one and not the other; second, the implementation of NPM is inherently at odds with PSE.

Some interviewees felt that performance targets had become more overarching and generic and aimed at public perception:

“Generally the targets that are included within [the PCT] or the LAA are fairly broad, ...and they don’t conflict with what we are already doing. Our

local targets are based on our needs assessment...they are milestones to our wider targets...so they don't conflict." (D8)

"We tell them what we think, we have some aspiration, the NTA agree...and then that filters up and there's never any challenge." (D11)

The inspection regime (e.g. Audit Commission, District Audit, HMIC) backed processes favoured by government, and sought to direct organisations down specific (NPM) pathways. Some mentioned an easing of audit and inspection and a 'light touch'; others saw counter-productive targets, indicators tangential to the work taking place, and strong government management of local performance:

"...generally I'd say they are more of a help than a hindrance, and they've got a very soft touch" (D11)

"We must have sixty measures on our performance targets and all of them are output measures...reducing re-offending was only put into the targets last year." (D18)

"Central government decide what, and predominantly how, and when, and we have to perform against that. Home Office agendas are very micro-managed, very centrally set in terms of targets, performance, monitoring." (D4)

"We are very, very prescribed...we're possibly the most statutory aspect of the CSP..." (D14)

The 'target culture' of government remained in evidence, often focused on process or outputs not the hard-to-measure outcomes:

"There is a target-driven culture here, one of fast pace and of meeting targets and of getting things delivered." (D5)

"In terms of [Central Government] it's more about the process we're going through...it's not so much have you achieved the final score. That may change this year." (D12)

"For me, the re-offending agenda is a double-edged thing; if you said...'that's our key priority, that's what we're here to do' I think that would fit with a lot of what [we] believe...but if you say 'reducing re-



offending is your priority, but so are these other sixty output-related targets' then you're on a hiding to nothing." (D18)

Respondents discussed NPM strictures such as tendering and outsourcing; performance management regimes; the 'target culture'; focus on processes not outcomes; and audit and inspection still rigorous and prescriptive in intent. Derby City was more likely to feel NPM was increasing than decreasing.

The partnership's attempts to exploit gaps and opportunities indicate how rare those opportunities are. The partnership has resources and structures for innovation, but finds its processes mandated centrally and audited frequently. This undermines network governance, making the partnership more like an implementation arm of an NPM-dominated government.

Limited opportunities indicate a damaged PSE. NPM demands adherence to processes, policies, ideas and underlying principles that cut across a PSE. These limit innovation, adaptation, wider and longer thinking and consideration of overall societal need, in favour of short-term expediency and focus on measurable efficiency.

The final dimension in this discussion area looks at the degree to which partnership work is formalised and determined by contractual terms, rather than informal trust. This is considered next.

***Dimension 22 role of commissioning: a PSE is demonstrated by a reliance on trust, rather than contractual relationships and obligations.***

Much of CSP work involves negotiating nominal resources – time or opportunity costs. Commissioning changes these negotiations: to a formal or contractual arrangement involving cash payment. The tangible nature of exchange, and formalising of conduct, may affect the PSE (Bogdanor 1004, Brereton & Temple 1999, Grimshaw et al 2003, Plant 2003).

Having a cash sum to spend may increase influence - commissioning may produce more rigorous decision-making, and more detailed audit trail:

“my job is more complicated because I need to offset our monies, predict trends...” (D11)

Public agencies often struggled when cash spending was involved:

“there is a completely different culture...I feel a lot of the teams around the agencies, cost isn't always such a big issue...they're not business-driven. They're driven by their agenda, whatever that is, which is admirable...they should be bothered about their agenda, that's correct, but sometimes it's as though they expect money to be there...” (D13)

The interviews demonstrated that commissioning sharpened their focus on spending and value, but commissioning could hinder a team mentality.

Commissioning can increase interdependence and autonomy as the local network makes choices, and balances local factors; or they can be decreased by external providers moving in, a reductive approach stressing contractual compliance, and restrictive contract requirements imposed by central government.

The balance lies in how commissions are negotiated and monitored. Contracts are prescriptive and narrow, with compliance the key issue. This undermines PSE by reducing trust, implying that only contractual terms matter, and reducing public service cohesion as alternative service providers bring different aims, priorities and ethos'.

This concludes the dimensions relating to the discussion area of impact of governance. Next, the discussion area moves to a narrower focus on the organisation. There are five dimensions within this, the first of which assesses the relative impacts of socialisation and self-selection

## Public Service Ethos: Discussion Area 7 Impact of organisation

<i>Discussion area</i>	<i>Dimension</i>
Public interest	Accountability Public interest Wider and longer thinking
Impact of governance	Degree of trust Impact of NPM processes Role of commissioning/contractual work
<b>Impact of organisation</b>	<b>Socialization vs self-selection</b> <b>Cultural-specific</b> <b>Impact of working level</b> <b>Outcomes/processes/traits</b> <b>Variance</b>
Impact of individual	Loyalty Motivation Personal values
Ethos comparison	vs voluntary sector vs public sector ethos

**Dimension 12 *cultural socialization vs self-selection*: extent to which PSE reflects existing values, and extent to which it reflects organisational culture**

PSE develops partly from a set of pre-existing values and beliefs; partly by exposure to organisational culture or attitudes (Audit Commission 2002, Becker & Connor 2005, McDonough 2006, Stackman *et al* 2006, Christensen & Wright 2009). PSE may be an extension of culture, or something more intrinsic within individual public servants (Lewis & Frank 2002, McDonough 2006, Buelens & Broek 2007, Park *et al* 2008). PSE might

represent self-selection – i.e. the current situation is the aggregate of previous recruitment and application: a ‘self-fulfilling prophecy’.

It was clear from the interviews that many felt PSE was a pre-existing drive derived from personal values: those values partly responsible for the choice of public over private sector:

“Personally I believe it stems from the individual...if there was a culture that was prevalent you would tend to fit in...but I don’t think you would last very long...you’ve got to have that sort of desire initially.”(D2)

“If it wasn’t I wouldn’t work here, I wouldn’t want to be here, it would be against my value base.”(D5)

“Does it apply to the partnership? Difficult one. Does it apply to individuals? Yes, definitely. Does it apply to all individuals? No. But I would say there are more yes than no...” (D10)

“It’s an intrinsic factor in an individual that gravitates to this type of work, more so than an individual coming in...and developing those...people gravitate to this as opposed to developing those within the situation.” (D11)

“I think a lot of the areas of work attract that sort of individual to the work in some ways...it attracts that sort of ‘we want to make a difference to people’s lives’ sort of individual.” (D15)

Some mentioned they had specifically joined public service to use PSE:

“This really appealed to me because it was about serving people...” (D3)

“That’s exactly why I came and worked for the CSP, originally...I want to put something back into society; so when the opportunity came up to work in the CSP, I thought ‘I’m still doing what I trained to do, what I like to do, but I’m working for an organisation that allows me to put something back into society, and help those that are [more] vulnerable than me.’ That’s why I came to this job rather than some other jobs I was looking at.” (D13)

Others suggested the difference between those arriving with a PSE, and those without, was demonstrable:

“In terms of ethos I am not wholly convinced it [future changes to the public sector] will make a great deal to change people’s attitudes – you either have it or you don’t; you either care or you don’t.” (D6)

The culture would not support views outside these values - someone without a PSE would find it difficult to thrive in the prevailing culture:

“I don’t think you’d go into these areas unless...you wouldn’t last very long because you wouldn’t be very good. We recruit people that have that ethos and look to reinforce that...” (D8)

This broadens the argument about prevailing culture – does it foster or hinder PSE? Crucially, respondents felt the partnership culture aided and strengthened the PSE:

“They’re all very passionate here...nearly everybody who works in their role...are very passionate about what they believe they are doing for their community...this is a very small organisation – partnership – and because of that you get more breathing space than you do in a larger organisation...individuals are allowed to vent their passions more, and you hear it all the time...” (D9)

“The people with that sort of mentality probably get on quite well here and stay longer, so perhaps that’s why we’ve ended up with more of those sort of people here...” (D15)

Some felt assistance was more oblique – e.g. a flatter organisational structure allowed a more demonstrable PSE (because more people were closer to the ‘front line’ where PSE was felt to be most visible).

Others believed the partnership’s culture did not foster PSE, or that an individual’s PSE survived despite the culture:

“I haven’t seen any change in the culture in the six years I’ve been here, I’ve not seen progressive change in the culture.” (D8)

“...there is a commitment there but the reality of the job doesn’t necessarily fit with what they came in to do...people either get very disillusioned or they do the job in a very mechanical way...”(D18)

Possibly, the culture impacting on the individual’s PSE was from the original partner organisation (not the partnership): secondees knew they would have to return to the original culture, and so retained it during secondment.

Most respondents felt PSE stemmed from instilled personal values that pre-dated joining the organisation, lightly influenced by organisational culture of either partnership or their own organisation. This does not negate self-selection: some identified that PSE was already noticeable in new recruits.

An important element is the belief that someone joining without such an ethos would ‘sink or swim’. This suggests a powerful role for organisational culture in socializing towards a particular end: partnership culture fitted the individual’s PSE or fostered the attitude; via loose structures and easy access to management. In Derby City the key factor was personal values, with culture a support mechanism for pre-set beliefs.

These interviews suggests a cohesive culture and identity within the partnership, encouraging network governance. This culture lends confidence and sense of ‘belonging’, fostering network governance dimensions such as interdependence.

For PSE, culture and self-selection interact iteratively. Intrinsic attitudes within those joining the partnership, chimed with public service notions. Once there, the culture supported such attitudes. However there was no overt evidence of the partnership deliberate fostering these attitudes, nor discussing PSE.

The partnership and partner organisations might also be influenced by cultural factors, from the region/nation where they are located. This possibility is explored in the next dimension.

**Dimension 13 cultural-specific: a PSE will demonstrate inherent consistencies across geographical or cultural space. However, the regional or historical context will alter the way in which these consistencies are played out in the public arena.**

A strong and vibrant PSE is likely to be visible in a variety of organisational and regional cultures (Pratchett 1999, Becker & Connor 2005, Wright 2007). While varying in some ways (especially how it is displayed), it should retain sufficient commonality with PSE elsewhere to be recognisable (Chapman 1993, Audit Commission 2002, Wright 2007). The dimension looks at whether PSE is changed by exposure to a particular culture or regional aspect, and if so, how this changes the PSE.

Few respondents commented on regional or culturally-specific issues. All governmental decisions were taken by central government: the regional government office had no strategic input of its own. Some partnership agencies also covered local authority areas outside Derby City but within Derbyshire (e.g. probation). The city drew in resources and influence from around the county:

“In reality it [being in a CSP] probably bears no resemblance in terms of reality to those 400 people out there in the county...it means very little to them. If you get people onside in Derby you can make progress a lot quicker than you can in the county...it's hugely difficult to deal with more than one layer...we can set up systems with one local authority, but if you happen to live in another authority area, you get a different service...”(D18)

There was almost no mention of a cultural-specific aspect, beyond a passing mention of a possible rural/urban friction. Within Derby City, there was no evidence of a regional or localised flavour to the culture.

The cohesion of the partnership stems from its co-located, quasi-organisational status; this comes from organic growth, not exogenous factors. This, in turn, suggests a strong network, secure in its location within a wider public service system.

The absence of regional or cultural identity suggests PSE is not particularly strong: it is not driving local public servants to develop a local approach to local issues. This implies

centralising government tendencies – the partnership is implementing not innovating. It may develop an identity and subsequent cohesion, but this is linked to its own internal workings, not the wider public interest.

In assessing the impact of the organisation on a PSE, it must be recognised that organisations have different working levels – strata within the hierarchy. The next dimension explores what impact this might have on the PSE

***Dimension 16 impact of working level: a PSE will be demonstrated as a principle across levels of organisational seniority. However, the ways and degrees in which a PSE can be demonstrated may vary across organisational levels.***

The impact of working level is a significant aspect of PSE. How a worker can control workload and resources towards particular aims, materially affects their role (Lipsky 1980). Seniority of role can influence motivation and the ethos they display (Rainey & Bozeman 2000, Nielsen 2006, Buelens & Broek 2007, Hill & Hupe 2007).

Some believed that seniority did not affect the PSE; PSE was an internal motivator:

“It’s great to be praised by your manager, but what really gives the buzz is praise...when the residents tell you ‘thank you’; that really does make it...that’s the real praise...it is about contributing to the needs of local people rather than saying ‘whoops, that’s my paycheque sorted, finished’”  
(D10)

“A lot of people wouldn’t have stuck around and put up with that shit [management attitude], if they weren’t motivated by making a change...”  
(D11)

Some felt the partnership’s flat structure linked effort to outcome, so a professionalized workforce was less affected by any sense of hierarchy. But hierarchy was debateable - were partner organisations more influential than the partnership’s overall culture; could PSE be seen throughout the tiers, and so was not restricted or enhanced by seniority?



Some argued that the synergy of the partnership encouraged PSE, so individual political positions were less influential:

“...this is a very small organisation – partnership – and because of that you get more breathing space than you do in a larger organisation...individuals are allowed to vent their passions more, and you hear it all the time...” (D9)

However, others felt the level in the hierarchy of the individual mattered: a recent culture of senior managers was restricting the PSE, being too top-down and imposing, stifling initiative or risk-taking:

“Honestly? The culture is influenced by the leadership and the previous director set the tone...while [the director] was creative and innovative...the style of leadership wasn’t agreeable to most people, most people found it difficult...” (D8)

“In order to survive here you had to achieve, you had to fit in...what kept people here, what motivated people, was this feeling of doing some good...” (D11)

Respondents often saw a difference between ‘front-line’ and senior management, with a stronger PSE at delivery:

[the closer to the front line, the more there is a PSE] “That sums it up perfectly!” (D7)

“When you talk to people dealing with front-line services, you think ‘yeah, that’s what we’re here for’. I think people who deal with our clients, they have more of a sense of those values.” (D13)

I think the people who work here, especially the operational...are here for the right reasons...people do the jobs they want to do because they want to make a difference.” (D17)

For network governance, working level matters on a prosaic basis of defining the structures and inter-relationships within the partnership. The flat structure suggests high

mutual interdependence – staff on a similar level must secure co-operation, not imposition.

For the PSE, one factor stands out: that the nearer a worker is to the client, the more PSE can be displayed. This is significant because it demonstrates an attitude towards PSE – that it can only be shown and observed through direct service contact. No thought is given to the notion of PSE being demonstrated by senior managers thinking strategically about long-term and wider societal impact.

As mentioned, there is a considerable difference between focusing on outcomes, rather than processes or traits. The next dimension explores where the focus lies, and what this might mean.

**Dimension 19 *outcomes/processes/traits: a PSE is demonstrated by a commitment to outcomes. A PSE must co-exist with the organisation's focus, which may be on changing processes, outcomes, or personal traits.***

PSE can be demonstrated in outcomes, or processes, or traits. However theory has previously focused on PSE's impact on outcomes or traits (Brereton & Temple 1999, Lawton 2004). As management theory has concentrated on changing processes as a way of changing behaviour and outcomes, so PSE theory has suggested that how services are delivered matters as much as the outcome, or thinking behind their delivery (Hoggett 2006).

Interviewees stressed the views that government targets and indicators were concerned with outcomes, forcing their work to focus on targets, not some broader idea of public interest:

“Quite tense...results-driven...people want to see outcomes.” (D7)

“Generally the targets that are included within [the PCT] or the LAA are fairly broad...and they don't conflict with what we are already doing. Our local targets are based on our needs assessment...they are milestones to our wider targets...so they don't conflict.” (D8)

“There is a target-driven culture here, one of fast pace and of meeting targets and of getting things delivered.” (D5)

“...in terms of [Dept of Communities and Local Government] it’s more about the process we’re going through...it’s not so much have you achieved the final score. That may change this year.” (D12)

“We are very, very prescribed...we’re possibly the most statutory aspect of the CSP...” (D14)

“We must have sixty measures on our performance targets and all of them are output measures...” (D18)

Some felt the PSE had been re-shaped, to emphasise policy and service outcomes:

“It’s about public perception of what you do” (D1)

“Because we are more about outcomes not outputs” (D2)

But most believed that PSE was a matter of personal traits – the outward exhibition of internal values that expressed a ‘world view’ that they held:

“If [there was no PSE] I wouldn’t work here, I wouldn’t want to be here, it would be against my value base.” (D5)

“Pretty much dedicated to the cause and the agendas that they’re involved in...the majority of people don’t pay much attention to the host organisations they’ve come from, or their governance...” (D12)

“I think there is a public service ethos, yes, there is a degree of commitment there, those values...of fairness, of wishing to give people a chance, etc...a commitment to public service delivery and the transparency that is associated with it...” (D18)

It was suggested that the partnership considered personal values ‘too woolly’, incompatible with a partnership focused on ‘delivery’.

Outcomes were seen as the target of government and, to an extent, management. Process was seen as key for individual workers: often ignoring political issues and focusing on work processes. Their work and performance was judged in process terms: targets were

set around achieving process-based figures, and this is where the concern of workers lies. This means there is little focus on the idea that PSE is demonstrated by *the way in which services are provided*, as well as the result.

The issue for network governance is less the nature of targets than the partnership's control of those targets. Most performance indicators are set nationally: the partnership is directed towards an outcome, with many processes prescribed - this limits network governance.

For PSE, 'output' is a more accurate phrase than 'outcome'; targets were concerned with measurable impact, not more intangible effects on the community or wider society. PSE suffers when there is too great a focus on process, too little attention to required traits over the long term, and interest in measurable outputs not intangible outcomes. 'Process' here meant efficient production of an output; not the importance of how processes are conducted in the public interest.

The next dimension recognises that the partnership consists of a number of different organisations. It looks at the degree to which they retain this 'seperateness' within a partnership framework, and the implications for PSE

**Dimension 23 variance: a PSE is demonstrated consistently across organisations/partnerships. However, the way in which PSE principles manifest themselves may alter according to context.**

The way PSE is demonstrated, and the stage of its development, will vary across organisations (Grimshaw *et al* 2003, Merali 2003, Buelens & Broek 2007). This dimension looks at how respondents see differences between partner organisations, giving an insight into how PSE dynamics within the partnership are operating.

Some interviewees felt the partnership had a similar culture and agenda to the partner organisations. Others, however, felt there was a divide between the partnership and its partners, created by the partnership being arrogant in dealing with partners:

“The culture of the partnership, confidentially, has been one of arrogance...from the way that it’s been managed...because we’ve had a separate branding...the partnership taking too much credit for other people’s work...[saying] ‘we’re the partnership and you need to work with us’.” (D3)

“There was a touch of arrogance around it [the CSP perception of the council]...” (D10)

Some took the view that, compared to the local authority, the partnership was quicker and less cautious; more ‘can-do’ but less reflective in its thinking; or that the partnership was less supportive than the local authority. This carries implications in terms of accountability, and internal politics between the partnership and local authority:

“Now, the partnership is a very exposed vehicle...what we physically do are the right things...but it means nothing at the moment because the councillors don’t like it...” (D9)

The partnership had, hitherto, been under less scrutiny than other agencies, but this was changing:

“There is bound to be more structured engagement between Scrutiny and the CSP...” (D16)

Respondents focused on differences between the partnership and partner organisations, rather than between partner organisations - an interesting feature in itself. It implies that many saw the partnership as an organisation, and so stressed differences to another organisation (e.g. the local authority). Thus, variance was seen as within/without the partnership, rather than within parts of the partnership.

This suggests a strong, confident partnership with a clear sense of identity; but also one struggling with its place relative to other organisations. Strong internal cohesion coexists with a confused and changing context. Variance between partnership and partner organisations is noticeable; within the partnership, less so. Network governance is

enhanced by such cohesion, but within a framework of multiple partners, government departments, priorities and resources, it comes at a price.

Lack of variance within partnership implies a strong partnership culture. This would enhance the PSE if that culture was in tune with PSE principles. To a great extent, it is: a strong sense of 'doing good', a commitment to public services. It also diminishes PSE by downgrading longer-term and wider thinking, tending towards internal politics and processes not outward-facing altruism.

This concludes the discussion area of impact of organisation. The evidence now becomes more focused still (having gone from governance to organisation) by looking at the individual. The first dimension for this is loyalty.

## Public Service Ethos: Discussion area 8 Impact of individual

<i>Discussion area</i>	<i>Dimension</i>
Public interest	Accountability Public interest Wider and longer thinking
Impact of governance	Degree of trust Impact of NPM processes Role of commissioning/contractual work
Impact of organisation	Socialization vs self-selection Cultural-specific Impact of working level Outcomes/processes/traits Variance
<b>Impact of individual</b>	<b>Loyalty</b> <b>Motivation</b> <b>Personal values</b>
Ethos comparison	vs voluntary sector vs public sector ethos

**Dimension 17 loyalty: a PSE will be demonstrated by loyalty to the wider public interest, and not merely to organisation, client or profession.**

PSE is partly concerned with who is displaying loyalty to whom (Farnham & Horton 1996, Pratchett & Wingfield 1996, Boyne 2002, Hoggett *et al* 2006). The focus of loyalty is not just a question of organisational dynamics; loyalty can be a proxy measure of organisational priorities, and what is therefore desirable to demonstrate. It also covers ideas such as individual perspective – someone loyal to a wider society is likely to

display a PSE (Audit Commission 2002, Grimshaw *et al* 2003, Christensen & Wright 2009). Studying loyalty gives an insight into the state of PSE within an organisation.

Some felt loyalty was to the organisation not the partnership, and their work could exist easily outside partnership:

“I have to work in a partnership because I can’t work elsewhere. As to added value...I find small value in being here...it’s more difficult being here...a lot of it boils down to personal relationships...if you went through the true mechanics of the partnership...it’s not helpful being here.” (D11)

“In reality it [being in a CSP] probably bears no resemblance in terms of reality to those 400 people out there in the county...it means very little to them.” (D18)

Others suggested partner organisations did not feel loyal to the partnership: or that such loyalty was temporary:

“Now, the partnership is a very exposed vehicle...what we physically do are the right things...but it means nothing at the moment because the councillors don’t like it...the new chief executive will seek to make this more of a council thing.” (D9)

Loyalty to partnership not individual organisations appears partly accidental, connected to the issue of the partnership being a quasi-organisation (that elicited loyalty) or still the sum of its parts:

“I don’t think anyone forgets that it’s through all the partners that we do this...the council is our legal underwriter, but...the council is one of our partners...I would say that I worked for the CSP. You have to have that view of working for the partnership itself, to have that external view of the individual partners; otherwise the tension between the partners comes into the work you do.” (D17)



While some interviewees displayed split loyalties, they felt this dichotomy could be accommodated day to day. Others identified loyalty to their agenda or field of work, not the organisation or partnership:

“Pretty much dedicated to the cause and the agendas that they’re involved in...the majority of people don’t pay much attention to the host organisations they’ve come from, or their governance... it [being a secondee] shows a dedication to the role rather than coasting along” (D12)

“I think you see the different ways the different people work...the YOS is a completely different way from the DIP team...” (D13)

“I think it varies according to the type of work, possibly the mentality within that smaller team or unit.” (D15)

Partnership allows balancing of individual and community needs, but public servants may have to make an overt choice:

“...but we don’t deliver services to customers...they aren’t our customers, there’s no choice...local public services are on really dodgy ground with this notion of ‘we can deliver services to individuals’. It’s called community safety because it’s about the safety of the community. We inherently cannot be customer-focused because people can’t request individual services...it’s not an individual relationship...it’s about our citizens, your community, your role as a citizen.” (D4)

For some, the loyalty was to work and the agenda driving it; the partnership (even the individual organisation) driving it was merely a vehicle. They had moved into the realm of personal loyalty: the work is primary, its location within other structures is secondary.

For network governance, loyalty to the partnership is a proxy for network cohesion and interdependence. Most felt loyal to their area of work and/or their organisation: loyalty to the partnership was limited, and an incidental consequence of their organisation joining the partnership. Partnership elicited low levels of loyalty, despite its strong identity. This may be the partnership emerging recently (loyalty taking longer to cement), or because this loyalty is shallow or fragile for some.

For PSE, there is the absence of any loyalty to the public. Respondents assume that public benefit is aggregated individual benefit: therefore, their logic suggests, loyalty to work area or expertise is somehow loyalty to public service. This logic misses the aspects of societal benefit that are not the sum of individual gains – again a lack of focus on wider, deeper and longer implications.

A second dimension for the individual is motivation: this is explored below.

***Dimension 18 motivation: a PSE is demonstrated by a commitment to serving the wider community. A PSE demonstrates a degree of altruism, which differs from personal and professional pride, and originate in the individual's motivation.***

PSE is closely linked to individual motivation, but paradoxically is seen by some commentators as the philosophical basis of that motivation (Pratchett & Wingfield 1996, Audit Commission 2002, Boyne 2002, McDonough 2006, Kim & Vandenabeele 2009). In this sense, the connection between motivation and PSE may be iterative. This dimension looks at individual motivation and altruism – how does it differ from personal or professional pride? To contribute to PSE (instead of efficiency, effectiveness or customer satisfaction), motivation should include some altruistic element (Audit Commission 2002, Lewis & Frank 2002, Wright 2007, Park *et al* 2008, Christensen & Wright 2009).

Many interviewees were equivocal about the existence of an altruistic basis – identifying motivation with an element of self-justification:

“...what kept people here, what motivated people, was this feeling of doing some good...I don't know if it's necessarily public service ethos – maybe a generic ethos of being motivated by making a difference, or...doing things well.” (D11)

“...we are here to do specific pieces of work and we shouldn't look for longevity...don't try and justify our existence by finding another piece of work to do.” (D12)

Some suggested that an individual's altruistic motivation was not supported by management: it was an individual motivation from within, lacking structured or deliberate fostering by management:

"It [using the PSE as a motivator] needs to be top-down and I'm not sure if we've got it." (D3)

Altruistic motivation could, it was said, be seen in some staff. This feeds into notions of individually-sourced motivation, not a prevailing ethos that covers the organisation:

"I haven't seen it...very rarely...yes within my team, but in other teams I see people treading over each other to get to the top every single time. I think [PSE] is just a theory...it exists in the voluntary sector but not in the public sector" (D7)

"Does it apply to the partnership? Difficult one. Does it apply to individuals? Yes, definitely. Does it apply to all individuals? No. But I would say there are more yes than no..." (D10)

Some identified a measure of altruism where staff could see the fruits of their labours – a direct connection encouraged PSE. This set altruism within a notion of delivery:

"People genuinely believe in what they do...I can't stress this enough...they don't turn up for the money, they don't turn up just to put food on the table...they turn up and are passionate about doing their jobs because they believe they are making a difference." (D1)

"This really appealed to me because it was about serving people..." (D3)

"The ethos is of wanting to deliver to the public – I see that commitment shining through; it's a hard-working ethos and a committed ethos. In terms of wanting to deliver and support the public...there is a keen enthusiasm to do that" (D6)

"...we moan, we groan, but we drive things forward...the only thing that drives that is a motivation to do more than what's on the job description." (D12)

“That’s exactly why I came and worked for the CSP, originally...I want to put something back into society; so when the opportunity came up to work in the CSP, I thought ‘I’m still doing what I trained to do, what I like to do, but I’m working for an organisation that allows me to put something back into society, and help those that are [more] vulnerable than me.’ That’s why I came to this job rather than some other jobs I was looking at.” (D13)

“...there’s a lot of goodwill...people work more hours than their contracted hours, they support each other, a lot more is given than is within their contract...they believe in what they’re doing...” (D14)

“I genuinely feel that the majority of people here want to make life better for the community. ...the sort of work they [my team] do, you couldn’t do it unless you wanted to make a difference to people’s lives...we don’t earn loads of money doing what we do, we do it because when I go home at the end of the day, I feel like I’ve tried to make a difference... the only thing that keeps them going is the fact that they know that they’re helping those people move on to a more positive future...” (D15)

These quotes suggest strong evidence of an altruistic intent, but without organisational or management support. Altruism, as described by interviewees, is on a personal basis; equivocation comes in how this intent plays out in the wider organisation.

Individual altruistic intent within motivation implies a uniform purpose that fosters shared identity, interdependence, trust and good communication. However, few respondents felt the partnership was supporting or enabling this: suggesting the network is not effective at enhancing an attitude that could aid the network. The network is undermining itself by failing to support a commitment to altruism.

There is a strong underlying motive among many to ‘do good’ and demonstrate altruistic motivation. However this applied individually, partly from intrinsic characteristics, and was not fostered by the wider organisation. While it contributes to PSE it does not demonstrate it - missing is wider, deeper thinking; a desire to understand the public interest; and linking activities for overall societal gain. Motivation demonstrated here did not show how individual and societal needs are weighed or balanced.

The third and final dimension concerned with the individual looks at the personal values of interviewees, and how this might reflect in their work.

***Dimension 20 personal values: a PSE is demonstrated by a link to personal values rather than a prevailing organisational or professional code.***

Some commentators have suggested that PSE embodies some of the personal values of individuals demonstrating it (Rainey & Bozeman 2000, Lawton 2004, Kim & Vandenabeele 2009). Argument continues about self-selection versus organisational culture, but most commentators agree PSE reflects personal values to some extent (Audit Commission 2002, Lewis & Frank 2002, Hogget *et al* 2006, McDonough 2006, Park *et al* 2008). This dimension explores how much PSE is driven by personal values, not codified behaviour driven by the organisation.

Many felt that personal values were being demonstrated, not a code of conduct or trammelling by corporate policy:

“In terms of ethos I am not wholly convinced it [future developments] will make a great deal to change people’s attitudes – you either have it or you don’t; you either care or you don’t.” (D6)

“It’s great to be praised by your manager, but what really gives the buzz is praise...when the residents tell you ‘thank you’; that really does make it...that’s the real praise...” (D10)

“People have that ethos when they come to the partnership. The partnership possibly fosters it, but I’m not sure it could drill it into people as such...” (D13)

“People work more hours than their contracted hours, they support each other, a lot more is given than is within their contract...they believe in what they’re doing...pay isn’t always everything, there’s a sense of fulfilment around your work...” (D14)

For others, the partnership’s structures and processes hindered demonstrating these values:

“It [PSE] comes with them to some extent...the type of people who come into the service and are attracted by the service...they have an idea of what the service is there to do...the reality might not fit their thoughts before they entered the service...but that [the PSE] is not necessarily developed by the organisation itself...there is a commitment there but the reality of the job doesn't necessarily fit with what they came in to do...people either get very disillusioned or they do the job in a very mechanical way...the probation service isn't necessarily harnessing, because of the activities it's doing and the priority it gives to some things over other things.” (D18)

Endurance of personal values, regardless of process or tier of the organisation, indicates the tensions that emerge through change. It shows how, for public servants, preservation of their own values underpins the continuation of some form of PSE, whatever the organisational shape.

Prevailing individual values are at odds with partnership structure and direction. There is a tension that will undermine network cohesion, interdependence and trust in the longer term; network members will feel the network is not pulling in their direction.

This suggests some prevailing ethos endures, whether the respondent believes the partnership is helping or hindering. But enduring values are only part of PSE, not all of it: what endures advances some aspects of PSE, but leaves other aspects behind.

This completes the three dimensions concerned with the individual. The final discussion area looks at comparisons between public sector and the voluntary sectors. It also assesses potential differences between PSE and what is known as a 'public sector ethos'. The comparison with the voluntary sector is considered first.

## Public Service Ethos: Discussion Area 9 Ethos comparison

<i>Discussion area</i>	<i>Dimension</i>
Public interest	Accountability Public interest Wider and longer thinking
Impact of governance	Degree of trust Impact of NPM processes Role of commissioning/contractual work
Impact of organisation	Socialization vs self-selection Cultural-specific Impact of working level Outcomes/processes/traits Variance
Impact of individual	Loyalty Motivation Personal values
<b>Ethos comparison</b>	<b>vs voluntary sector</b> <b>vs public sector ethos</b>

**Dimension 24 voluntary sector: a PSE demonstrates clear differences from a voluntary sector ethos.**

PSE is often compared to private sector ethos: such comparison allows contrasts and similarities to highlight certain facets of PSE (Moore 2000, Audit Commission 2002, Public Administration Committee 2002, Plant 2003, Cooney 2004). As the voluntary sector is involved in CSP work (particularly commissioned work in health), this dimension looks at differences between PSE and voluntary sector ethos. The latter

operates under different restrictions, opportunities, financial models, time horizons – all these can impact upon the ethos (Plant 2003).

Some suggested that voluntary sector had a true public service ethos that the public sector lacked:

“I think [PSE] is just a theory. I do get that sense in the voluntary sector; people are there because they want to do a service to the public and aren’t there for themselves or the money...it exists in the voluntary sector but not in the public sector” (D7)

It was felt a key difference was that the voluntary sector had passion and an innovative streak, but was undirected; the public sector was less passionate, but more focused. Others identified that the voluntary sector had more choice about clientele, freed of a requirement for universal services, possibly as a legacy of how voluntary organisations have been funded:

“Because you can choose your time...a happier place because people choose to be there...they don’t have to come into work...they do pick and choose, but some are incredibly loyal and do have a sense of duty...” (D14)

“Some of the voluntary sector that we work with are more targeted with the groups that they work with...more of a specialism.” (D15)

Comparison with the voluntary sector highlights some conditions and limitations for partnership work: political involvement, accountability, and universality. These facets demonstrate how networks must manage limitations, which restrict how/where/when public servants can operate.

Evidence from this research shows that public servants can - when specifically asked - consider wider and longer concepts, such as universal provision. They understand that voluntary services are different, and may avoid some limitations of the public sector. But this does not translate to respondents understanding the need for wider and longer-term thinking about public interest: they remain rooted to individual service, and see community as an aggregate of individual needs.



The final dimension of the final discussion area, assesses PSE against a ‘public sector ethos’.

***Dimension 25 vs public sector ethos: a PSE demonstrates a different approach to theoretical notions of a ‘public sector ethos’. A PSE will be demonstrably different to an idea of loyalty to public sector processes and continuity.***

One theoretical critique of PSE is that public organisations may exhibit a ‘public sector ethos’ rather than ‘public service ethos’ (Laffin 1998, Brereton & Temple 1999, Public Administration Committee 2002, Christensen & Wright 2009). The former indicates a belief that services ‘should’ be provided by the public sector; maintenance and support of that public sector is a legitimate aim for an ethos. The latter contends that service in the public interest is the key, rather than maintaining the status of the organisation or individual delivering it. This dimension looks for evidence of a public sector ethos.

Some felt that there was a self-serving ethos, at the expense of PSE:

“Every man for himself, to the detriment of service sometimes...” (D7)

“...we are here to do specific pieces of work and we shouldn’t look for longevity...don’t try and justify our existence by finding another piece of work to do.” (D12)

For others, the ethos differed from PSE, being more concerned with survival:

“In order to survive here you had to achieve, you had to fit in...what kept people here, what motivated people, was this feeling of doing some good...I don’t know if it’s necessarily public service ethos – maybe a generic ethos of being motivated by making a difference, or...doing things well.” (D11)

But some differentiated between a public sector ethos, and what the respondent saw:

“There is a difference between public service ethos, and simple public sector ethos; that people just don’t want to work in the private sector because maybe they’d have to work harder, or the pay would be lower, or they might have a nasty boss or whatever...most people...have much more than that, it’s about an ethos of wanting to serve the public.” (D16)

For network governance, this implies that staff motivation goes beyond any organisational need for survival or justification. Network governance theory suggests networks can become internally focused, seeing their own expertise as paramount. That is not taking place within the partnership: if occurring at all, it is the response to exogenous shock from government policy.

For PSE, respondents do understand the difference between public sector ethos and PSE: they do not believe the former is taking root. But their view of PSE remains focused on the individual; they differentiate it from a public sector ethos through the degree of altruism and sacrifice observed.

## **Conclusion**

This completes the analysis of responses for Derby City for the 26 dimensions of network governance and PSE. The analysis has detailed interviewees' views for each dimension, and viewed the potential resonance of these responses for both network governance and PSE.

This chapter has given the evidence presented by respondents on a dimension-by-dimension basis. The next chapter draws together the experiences in both case studies, along with the theory and commentary of academic research. This allows direct comparison between Carmarthenshire and Derby City, to draw some conclusions on both PSE and network governance.

## **CHAPTER EIGHT – ANALYSIS OF CASE STUDY EVIDENCE**

### **Introduction**

Chapters Six and Seven set out, for the two case studies, the views of interviewees from two separate Community Safety Partnerships (CSPs). They related interviewee responses to questions about experiences and attitudes on network governance and PSE. This data was captured in 26 dimensions, and subsequently collapsed into 9 discussion areas.

The chapter considers not only implications for individual dimensions, but also how they operate in tandem, and linkages between dimensions. The interview was designed to cover all aspects of PSE and network governance and not merely some of them; it presented academic issues in terms that respondents could comprehend; it prepared for cross-analysis between network governance and PSE (which has not been attempted before); and it organised the material coherently.

Comparing and contrasting the two case studies allows differences to be identified and the reasons for them analysed: this builds a picture across variations in governance, structure, intent, geography, and other factors within the two case studies. The dimensions are collapsed down into the nine discussion areas: this allows assessment of how dimensions interact and overlap, and therefore how the bigger picture builds.

The chapter is set out as follows:

Each discussion area is considered in turn - for how they assist our understanding of PSE and network governance; and to allow an assessment to be made of potential connections between the dimensions. Once each discussion area has been analysed, there is a set of conclusions on the entire concept.

Overall conclusions concerning network governance and PSE, and potential connections between them, are the subject of the next chapter. This chapter focuses on providing a rich and deep analysis on the discussion areas themselves – a broader perspective comes in Chapter Nine.

## Network Governance: Discussion Area 1 Agency versus structure

<i>Discussion heading</i>	<i>Dimension</i>
<b>Agency vs structure</b>	<b>Agency vs structure</b>
Separation from government	Autonomy Centralisation Tiers of government Trust
Network dynamics	Innovation Interdependence Openness Resources
Governance and NPM	Governance and NPM

### *Dimension 1: agency versus structure*

Network governance theory suggests (Rhodes 1996, Pierre & Peters 2000, Löffler 2004) that networks are a combination of structure (how the network is organised) and agency (relationships and personalities of individuals within networks). It is also suggested (Marsh & Smith 2002) that there is a symbiotic relationship between the two. However, (Hendricks & Topps 2005) the relationship is not fully explained in theory – i.e. the dynamics cannot be predicted. The process is agreed as fluid and iterative, but theory cannot demonstrate cause-and-effect, or predict impacts of one upon the other. Theory can describe basic parameters and some influencing factors, but cannot predict behaviour in a given situation.

Both case studies showed that agency (i.e. individual relationships and personalities) is more significant than structure. Respondents continually returned to the personal/personality, as the root of significant co-operation. The role of relationships between key

players was emphasised: in senior positions key relationships helped to shape partnership direction and momentum, while at ‘ground level’ operational co-operation was required.

However, in Derby City a fear was expressed that structure undermined relationships, by creating artificial distance between individuals. But a lack of structure might leave relationships too loose and ad-hoc: structure gave relationships meaning and boundaries. Hendricks and Topps (2005) identified gaps in structures as crucial and positive, giving individuals room for manoeuvre between existing structures. The slight ambivalence within Derby City suggests that, for some, these gaps yield anxiety and potential ad-hoc individualism; for others, a welcome flexibility enabling things to get done. There is some support for Hendricks and Topps’ position in Derby’s use of structural gaps to innovate and adapt. But the jury would appear to be out – this dilemma was not mentioned in Carmarthenshire: perhaps because Carmarthenshire structures were looser and less clearly defined, or because the network had not matured to a point where members sought ‘workarounds’ to get past structural blocks.

Marsh and Smith’s (2002) dialectical model of policy networks suggested structure and agency was a continual iterative and learning process, each shaping the other in subtle ways. Evidence here does not support this idea; instead, there is a dichotomy. In Carmarthenshire structure has specific and significant impact; while agency plays its part in delivery, more strategic work is profoundly influenced by structure and its enforcement. Structure enables, by imposing a shape and trajectory to community safety work. Derby City is almost the reverse of this - structure imposes boundaries and rules, but does not significantly enable - fitting with Dowding’s (2001) view that structures both enable and constrain, with the balance difficult to measure. It also fits with some of Marsh and Smith’s ideas; in particular, that structure development is partly a function of exogenous factors beyond the network itself.

The case studies suggest that much innovation in partnerships takes place despite modern governance structures – e.g. Derby City inspired by constricting structures into developing new actions, whereas consensus in Wales led to a less innovative approach. Howlett (2002) suggested certain structures facilitated change because they are more ‘permeable’ to ideas. Carmarthenshire’s view supports this: structure created preconditions for change that would not otherwise have existed or been so effective.

However, the ‘gestalt’ feeling stemmed less from structure than *government action in support* of structure. Many respondents mentioned WAG’s habit of pushing certain structures via funding criteria, operational requirements, and audit and inspection e.g. tying money for community safety projects into larger funds concerning social deprivation; or European funding required ‘matched funding’ from local agencies. Respondents felt WAG achieved this by consensus, but the processes echo Kooney’s (2004) assertion that organizational field is key to structure; the shape and make-up of the organizational field dictates certain aspects of structure, but also makes them more appropriate. What we are seeing here is that part of the make-up of organizational field is regional: Carmarthenshire’s view of structure as a precondition was not shared in Derby City, implying the ‘gestalt’ feeling was localised. Derby City’s physical distance from government in London; no ameliorating presence at regional level; and high degree of co-location; all created an absence of ‘gestalt’ feeling.

Neither case study was an example of Damgaard’s (2006) notion of network governance, characterised by co-operation based on interdependence between government and network. Government imposed its will on a number of levels – policy, funding requirements, performance criteria, audit and inspection work, and subsequent funding. The reverse did not apply: no government dependence on the agencies. In governance structures, both demonstrate Damgaard’s concept of ‘hierarchy in disguise’ rather than genuine network governance.

Overall, evidence supports the notion of a complex relationship between agency and structure, not only in the moment, but also in how those structures and relationships develop over time. It also highlights the importance of physical structures such as geography and co-location, even in an era of supposedly ‘shrinking distances’.

Taking this dimension and looking at a slightly broader view, enables us to see it as one of the nine discussion areas, in the next section.

### **Discussion Area 1 – Governance: Agency versus structure**

The case studies suggest these main themes concerning the relationship between agency and structure:

Structure and agency have a symbiotic and iterative relationship. Ultimately agency dictates the manner, speed and effectiveness of implementation; structure dictates terms, policy and procedure at a strategic level.

The method, extent and nature of structural imposition and reinforcement are significant. Structure is not an event but a process; within the partnership and without. Structure is reinforced (or not) by statute, direction, funding criteria, imposition of guidance, and audit and inspection. These factors impact upon agents and their interaction: the greater the reinforcement of structure, the more agents operate within known rules, and the greater the degree of ‘game-like interactions’ (Rhodes 1996, Damgaard 2006).

The impact of structure depends both on previous and current context. In Carmarthenshire, partnership structure (and its reinforcement) was a significant change, lending shape to loose relationships and overcoming certain geographical and silo-mentality hurdles. Structures were a step forward and generated feelings of ‘gestalt’ improvement. But in Derby City the geographical hurdle was not significant; structure imposed order and shape to relationships, but has not created the same ‘gestalt’.

Physical structure matters: in Derby City ‘structure’ must also be applied to the quasi-organisational set-up – i.e. a co-located set of partners who are almost an organisation. This ‘structure’ is more significant than any structure imposed by government since CSPs were formed: it makes more of a material difference to how workers behave and see their role.

Perception of agency’s role is also affected by the degree of co-location. In both case studies, the primacy of relationships was felt strongest by those co-located with partner organisations and individuals. This primacy may reflect working conditions, or indicate that the primacy of agency increases with physical co-location, meaning co-location can reduce the impact of structure within networks.

The next section looks at the discussion area of separation from government – the degree to which the partnership acts as an autonomous network.



## Network Governance: Discussion Area 2 Separation from government

<i>Discussion heading</i>	<i>Dimension</i>
Agency vs structure	Agency vs structure
<b>Separation from government</b>	<b>Autonomy</b> <b>Centralisation</b> <b>Tiers of government</b> <b>Trust</b>
Network dynamics	Innovation Interdependence Openness Resources
Governance and NPM	Governance and NPM

### *Dimension 2: Autonomy*

A key criterion for network governance (Rhodes 1996, Pierre and Peters 2000, Entwistle *et al* 2007) is network independence. Without autonomy networks are merely an implementation forum and system for government policy. Network governance is partly evidenced by independent thinking and action on policy implementation, identification of issues and solutions, use of resources, and mutual trust between members. Network governance theorists have previously noted (Damgaard 2006) how networks are often, at best, quasi-autonomous.

Rhodes (1996) and Stoker (2004) acknowledged the British political system is poorly placed to deliver network governance, compared to a federal structure. The case studies support this view: the experience in both case studies suggest a reluctance by central government to let go, or a tendency to replace overt control measures with more covert ones. The devolved WAG is more consensual and ‘hands-off’, allowing the network to

develop and act semi-autonomously. Derby City felt more trammelled by central government, with no intervening layer. The absence of a regional government tier seems significant: the highly centralised nature of public policy militates against the emergence of truly autonomous networks. Rhodes (1996) and Lowndes & Sullivan (2004) suggested network governance occurred when networks were semi-independent, self-organizing and resisted central government. This independence does not appear here – networks reflect priorities and performance aims of central government. However, autonomy must be considered alongside other dimensions; experiences in innovation, for example, suggest a more nuanced picture.

Overall, autonomy is low in both cases, albeit slightly higher in the more laissez-faire approach of WAG. In Carmarthenshire, greater autonomy from WAG is noticeable compared to tighter control from the Home Office. While government and local agencies agree on broad principles, there is conflict around agencies' responsibility for organising service delivery. Other dimensions expand on how this conflict plays out.

### ***Dimension 3: Centralisation***

Rhodes (2000) issued a warning that many central government initiatives 'failed to learn the lesson' of the need for network governance; instead pursuing a top-down agenda. There is clear evidence of this top-down nature today, although the degree of central control varies among government departments. In Wales devolved powers have a more 'hands-off' and steering-type approach compared to Westminster (especially the Home Office). This chimes with Kokx & van Kempen's (2010) view that government finds it difficult to produce effective 'vertical integration' from central government to front line.

Damgaard (2006) suggests networks do not replace hierarchy but work within it; how much they can assert themselves partly depends on the strength of willing/able actors - a lack of such actors creates a vacuum that hierarchy would fill. The case studies suggest that hierarchies pre-existed the network and continue to dominate. The dynamic is imposed hierarchy (networks seek gaps in coverage); not network domination with hierarchy taking up the slack.

Howlett (2002) suggests the nature and extent of the intended policy change dictates the kind of network that emerges. There is some evidence for this. The strongest central direction is in policing and youth offending: control of community safety issues must be yielded to other agencies, by public services with a long history in that arena. This is deeper change than - for example - health, where most work continues as before. Agencies have to adapt to different extents when joining the partnership. This impacts on the way partnerships developed; some agencies only recently committed to the partnerships, while others have been fully engaged from the start.

Newman (2001) suggests evidence of true network governance is patchy and overstated - much policy remains predominantly hierarchical or market-led. Newman believes previous centralisation remains; covered by rhetoric and apparent power dilution. Newman focuses on language around partnerships - continued centralised power; messy introduction of intended change; and 'inclusive consultation' perpetuating existing inequalities.

This gap between rhetoric and reality is evident in the case studies. Community Safety's introduction was messy and rhetoric-dominated: organisations have joined the partnership at different times and with different rationales - it was not a coherent strategy. Power asymmetries within the partnerships continue now. Some agencies dominate (e.g. police, local authority), some issues are peripheral or semi-engaged (e.g. fire, community cohesion). Considerable power is exercised from the centre (less so with a regional government). Agencies struggle for meaningful public consultation, and fret about 'hard to reach' groups within society.

Loffler (2004) suggested good network governance involved central government managing relationships and building by leadership. Here the balance is not struck - practitioners feel the partnership is pushed by statute or resource management to follow a 'one size fits all' process. This position contradicts Loffler's idea of government as an enabler, steering groups but not directing. The evidence is of interaction that is almost exclusively one-way, with less steering and more directing.

Overall, centralisation varies across government departments, and is mitigated by a tier of regional government, but fundamentals remain. Government is still prescriptive,

hindering the emergence of network governance. Instead, networks implement centrally-led policy, and fight to exploit perceived gaps in hierarchical structures.

### *Dimension 9: Tiers of government*

Goss (2001) stated that effective networks operated across organisational boundaries and between government layers – i.e. operating vertically not within layers, and using the dynamics of inter-layer politics. There is no formal mechanism for this in the case studies: networks exist locally (based on local authority area) and the next level is government (Cardiff or Westminster). There is no national representation at local level, or vice-versa, and in Derby City no meaningful regional layer. The two layers (local and national) are therefore, for Goss, signalling a sub-optimal network. The lack of network involvement in any higher governmental layer reinforces centralising tendencies, reduces network innovation and creativity, and pools power in Westminster or Cardiff.

Pierre and Peters (2000) and Newman (2001) point out that network governance may disperse central government power, but not reduce it. Pierre and Peters believe the state continues to wield the same power using different instruments, and using levers in a different way. The case studies partly support this, especially regarding the Home Office, which continues to greatly influence local policies using NPM-style targets and audits: respondents mentioned a target culture, central micro-managing and imposition of policy. However, WAG has adopted more of a light-touch steering role, despite holding most of the formal power previously exercised by Westminster. This suggests genuine reduction in government power, not spreading the same power across a different spectrum.

There is patchy evidence of the type of genuinely devolved power suggested by Bevir and Rhodes (2003) as a prerequisite of genuine network governance. The case studies suggest the reaction to governance structure may be as important as the structure itself.

Overall, the evidence shows strong centralisation, and no structures to allow networks to influence government levels above them. Claimed changes in power are often illusory; being dispersals of power into new mechanisms, not power yielded. The Welsh Assembly has partially yielded central control to partnerships but Westminster - in both case studies - has not.

### ***Dimension 10: Trust***

Models of network governance (Pierre and Peters 2000) assume high trust between network members. This stems from shared expertise and service areas; mutual interests and aims; high professionalism and professionalisation among network members; and structures that foster interdependence and reliance. High trust levels are intrinsic to network governance and, while maintained by negotiations and interactions, almost a 'natural' element.

The case studies support the theoretical view of intrinsic and high levels of trust, but some subtleties remain which were uncovered by the research. It was evident from the case studies that trust was reduced by contractual arrangements and written criteria, supporting Lawton's (2004) claim that trust reduced when compliance replaced presumptions of integrity. Derby City in particular suggests trust between partnership members also stems from working together closely on shared issues (especially when co-located). However, this kind of trust could occur in any organisation – it is not unique to networks. The research showed that structure was important, potentially creating mini-silos or political jockeying and thus undermining trust. Alternatively, mixed teams and structures designed to foster a mature network could encourage trust.

There is a further trust issue: from government to network. The Carmarthenshire case study showed that WAG was relatively distant, employing light-touch inspection and consensus about overall priorities, if not the detailed process. In Derby City there was less trust from government – more hands-on and prescriptive, with a process-heavy inspection regime.

Bevir and Rhodes (2003) argued genuine power devolution was necessary for network governance, requiring high trust between government and organisations. However, in the case studies trust from government, and trust between network members, is *inversely proportional*. In Carmarthenshire laissez-faire has led to a slowly-maturing network, with little of the co-location that can foster trust (though geography is significant here). In Derby City lack of trust from central government has been met with a close-knit quasi-organisation, co-located partly from necessity, with higher levels of trust between

members. Derby City has gone further and faster towards closer integration (physically and organisationally), resulting in higher trust levels, despite having less apparent autonomy than Carmarthenshire.

Overall, the research suggests that co-location and low central government trust have – paradoxically in terms of theoretical thinking on the latter - seen closer inter-agency trust.

This section has analysed the four dimensions making up this discussion area. The next section draws these threads together into some broader conclusions.

### **Discussion Area 2 – Separation from government**

This discussion area covers four dimensions of governance: autonomy, degree of centralisation, tiers of government, and trust. From these, the following themes emerge as a result of this research:

Current arrangements between partnerships and government reflect considerable central control, especially at strategic level and in setting priorities and targets. Partnerships wield autonomy where possible, but this is limited. Lack of autonomy is not balanced by greater legitimacy or accountability; most national decision-making is made without overt reference to public opinion.

The degree of control varies between government departments, despite broad consensus on ‘public value’ and the merits of partnership. In short; the argument is won, but details remain messy and contestable.

WAG has a different approach – more consensual and laissez-faire, setting broad parameters but not specifics. This better fits theoretical ideas of network governance, and seems genuine power diminution, not dispersal.

There is a ‘gap’ between local networks, and national government. Neither actively engages with the other; communication is mainly top-down. There is no management of network relationships between layers: this exacerbates local/national tensions.

Trust between network members is significantly affected by co-location, which encourages shared history, meaning and understanding. Little trust from government to network may, paradoxically, draw network members closer together, increasing mutual trust, if there is also physical co-location.

The next section looks at the discussion area of network dynamics, beginning with a breakdown of the four dimensions involved.

## Network Governance: Discussion Area 3 Network dynamics

<i>Discussion heading</i>	<i>Dimension</i>
Agency vs structure	Agency vs structure
Separation from government	Autonomy Centralisation Tiers of government Trust
<b>Network dynamics</b>	<b>Innovation</b> <b>Interdependence</b> <b>Openness</b> <b>Resources</b>
Governance and NPM	Governance and NPM

### *Dimension 4: Innovation*

Derby City's view of partnership as offering additional opportunities to innovate (e.g. seed funding, financial and project management) links to Hendricks and Topps' (2005) idea of individual entrepreneurs, acting in 'gaps' between networks. Derby City created new structures and processes, exploiting spaces left unfilled by top-down policy, which the research demonstrates fit with four pre-conditions identified by Hendricks and Topps:

- pressure from below – e.g. a new domestic violence unit, following pressure from practitioners for a better, victim-focused and more effective service
- room for manoeuvre – the partnership did not slavishly follow prescribed processes, but consciously looked for different ways of delivering
- administrative backing – Derby's structure enables support mechanisms and long-term stability to new projects, that Carmarthenshire cannot



- interpersonal co-productive relationships – establishing projects requires close interaction, aided by co-location

These four elements demonstrate how Derby City acts like a maverick. The contrast with Carmarthenshire suggests Derby needed the pre-condition of administrative backing: a fast and flexible response to identified need, with a skills base to support a nascent project. Without this skills base, the response would have been more conventional. Durose (2009) argues the front-line worker can move beyond merely ‘coping’ with complexity and become a ‘civic entrepreneur’ and ‘situated agent’. The evidence suggests this ability depends as much on preconditions (e.g. logistical support), as on enthusiasm or individual skills.

Damgaard (2006) views levels of innovation and policy development as determinants of network health and power. In the case studies, networks have not had autonomous involvement in policy development; instead, they have limited capacity, opportunity or incentive. For Damgaard, this situation indicates hierarchy rather than genuine network, but the case studies imply greater nuance than this. For example, Derby’s situation suggests heavy central government control (‘hierarchy by network’), yet it produces more innovation than Carmarthenshire’s laissez-faire governance.

Overall, a key aspect of innovation is not the degree of centralised control by government, but the internal support structures of the network. A close network, with resources to support projects, ready availability of specialist knowledge, and support structures; all this seems as significant as encouragement from government.

### ***Dimension 5: Interdependence***

Rhodes (1996) identified interdependence between agencies as a crucial parameter of network governance: agencies within networks cross previously-held boundaries, and continually negotiate over this. Rhodes believed using resource allocation to push networks towards co-operation – ‘steering’ a network – was a legitimate government action.

Evidence from the case studies suggests a more nuanced approach. In Carmarthenshire some rivalries remain: interdependence comes slowly from a gradual network evolution, induced by government criteria for resources and performance. Derby City identifies greater interdependence: the quasi-organisation produces individual rivalries (especially at senior level), but greater commonality of problems and purpose.

Interdependence in Derby City fits with Rhodes' ideal of a governance network; but not because 'that is how networks evolve': otherwise, Carmarthenshire would be the same. Instead, there are real differences. Derby City shows interdependence stems partly from co-location in a quasi-organisational environment – agencies forced together, sharing premises and management and experiences, bonding into a single institution. Personal rivalries and political ambitions remain (as in a single institution), but merely cloud the overall picture of integrating aims and resources.

### ***Dimension 7: Openness***

Entwistle *et al* (2007) suggest that networks need to be fluid and open to be effective. In the case studies, the key is underpinning structures that allow entry (and exit); not the willingness of agents to be open, or national political drive. Derby City is locally highly-politicized and politically-contested, and so might be assumed to be less open than Carmarthenshire, which is a more benign political factor locally (considerable consensus within the partnership, and with WAG; the partnership less overtly links itself with projects; it does not resemble a powerful and rival quasi-organisation).

The case studies, however, showed the opposite. New partners find it more difficult to become involved in Carmarthenshire than in Derby City – they mention a 'not invented here' syndrome; cite more conservatism; there is less frequent entry and exit of individual groups or agencies. This may be partly the lower levels of partnership activity and reduced opportunities to build interpersonal relationships. But it also reflects the systems, support structures and mechanisms available in Derby City. Setting up the domestic violence programme in Derby, for example, required all of the following infrastructural support: access to human resources, finance, project management and other support systems; longer-term funding; specialist expertise on-site; and existing processes and procedures.

If the new entrant is seen as an organisational version of a new employee, Derby City offers a significantly more advanced induction programme, with better facilities and quicker route to hands-on involvement. Derby City, somewhat paradoxically, is both more political and more open than Carmarthenshire. There is a contradiction emerging here with Entwistle *et al* (2007), who felt networks become closed systems, subject to groupthink and reluctant to embrace new partners. In Derby the established nature of the partnership has enabled, not discouraged, future entrants.

### ***Dimension 8:Resources***

Rhodes (1996) and Gains (2004) identified network governance as involving members continually negotiating over sharing and deploying resources. Respondents mentioned government restrictions and caveats on resources and their use, often backed by audit and inspection. These restrictions echo Rhodes' (2000) point about networks within a centralised UK political structure: Westminster continued to control resources despite the existence of networks (also Newman 2001). The point is reinforced by the laissez-faire approach of WAG, where the case study showed that a regional government was less restrictive, and more willing to yield power and control.

Both the level and type of resources are important factors. When overall funding was good, and resources largely opportunity cost rather than cash, discussion was fairly benign and consensus forthcoming. Where funding was tight project existence was questioned, not the priority of various elements of it. Commissioned work made negotiations trickier. Continual negotiation becomes more complex when cash is involved and budgets are tight – this contextual layer builds a more nuanced picture than basic theory suggests. Some room for negotiation over resources is removed by tight government caveats on where and how resources are used; and by tight audit of these strictures.

Network governance theory needs to adjust to the realities of continued central control – reduced negotiation has consequences in loosening shared network aims, reduced need for communication, and less shared experience. Theory also needs to consider the differences in process and outcome when the resource is cash, not 'opportunity cost': this

influences the nature, extent and frequency of negotiation. Theory needs a less monolithic view of 'resources', and less generic view of the influence of resources.

This section has looked at the four dimensions individually: the next section draws these lessons together for a wider perspective.

### **Discussion Area 3 Network dynamics**

The discussion area looks at innovation, interdependence, openness and resources. Drawing together the perspectives from these individual dimensions provides the following overall thoughts for network dynamics:

Networks can innovate, given certain pre-conditions. The most crucial factor is not, as theory might suggest, freedom to innovate handed out by central government. Rather, it is preconditions of appropriate support structures, mechanisms, expertise and will. If they are not present, networks operate as an implementation arm of national government policy, even where policy is set within laissez-faire governance

Interdependence is nuanced, and does not exist simply because a network exists. Key criteria for interdependence are shared experience, and commonality of resources and management. This mirrors interdependence within an organisation: it is not unique to a network

Openness in networks greatly depends on infrastructural support for new entrants, not perceptions of an 'open culture'. Such infrastructure includes high network activity, enabling early involvement for new entrants

Resource negotiations are simple and consensual when discussions are about opportunity cost; when high overall budgets have been set; and with few contractual arrangements to support. Negotiations become more difficult in a commissioning arrangement; where cash sums are involved; and/or overall budgets or resources are tight. Co-operative negotiations are therefore not 'givens' from the network's existence - they are the result of context

This concludes the section on the discussion area of network dynamics. The next section looks at the impact of NPM on governance.

## Network Governance: Discussion Area 4 Governance and NPM

<i>Discussion heading</i>	<i>Dimension</i>
Agency vs structure	Agency vs structure
Separation from government	Autonomy Centralisation Tiers of government Trust
Network dynamics	Innovation Interdependence Openness Resources
<b>Governance and NPM</b>	<b>Governance and NPM</b>

### *Dimension 6: NPM Structures*

Bevir and Rhodes (2003), and Pierre and Peters (2000), see NPM as the form of governance that preceded network governance. Despite some overlap, contiguous operation and transition, the two are very different. Some feel network governance is a response to NPM and, especially, to perceived problems that NPM brings. For example, NPM introduces market-based thinking to public policy (Denhardt and Denhardt 2000), but this needs regulation to smooth inequalities, and to prevent fragmented services resulting from greater competition.

The case studies focused research on performance management, performance measurement, audit and inspection aspects of NPM: the most direct and visible aspects. Pierre and Peters (2000) argue the state uses power (and implied legitimacy) less for direct control and more for indirect steering: this is only partially true, or not true at all, in both case studies. There was limited autonomy to set local targets: many were set

nationally, with WAG passing on a slightly-adjusted version of Westminster requirements. Here, NPM undermines network governance through central control. The onus was on processes, means and systems aimed at overtly-stated outcomes.

Audit and inspection cements this idea. Some spoke of a lighter-touch regime, but many government departments focused on a narrow set of targets, with prescribed processes for reaching them. Conduct is ‘forced’ by regulation, not ‘presumed’ (Lawton 2004). Audit and inspection showed little consideration of target suitability, or the ‘opportunity cost’ of achieving them. Denhardt and Denhardt (2000) argue that, for NPM to work effectively, accountability becomes a symbiotic process: there is little evidence of that here.

Supporters of NPM approaches to the public sector such as Brereton and Temple (1999) argue public services exist to serve the public, and NPM rigorously ensures they are efficient with public funds. In the case studies the criteria for ‘efficiency’ are narrow, process-oriented and short-term. They undercut the outcome-oriented and longer-term *raison d’être* of the network. Boyne’s (2002) point is that NPM fails because private sector values are not directly transferable, or not enough is known about what works generally. The case studies suggest Boyne is correct to infer that NPM focuses on a narrow band of changes, undermining network governance. NPM prioritises hierarchical control, not steering network governance.

Overall, there is little evidence that NPM has ‘had its day’: different government departments and tiers of government hold some different positions. There is considerable evidence that process-led focus on short-term and measurable performance prevails. Some parameters of network governance are undermined by this focus – significant central control of resources; trust from government to agencies is limited; innovation is stifled; autonomy is lower than network governance theory would expect.

This section has looked at NPM and governance as a dimension – the following section makes some wider overall points.

#### **Discussion Area 4 Governance and NPM**

The case studies demonstrates the following themes on governance and NPM:

NPM measures have been introduced in a hierarchical and centralised way; they have undermined network governance by direction and sanctions from the centre.

NPM further undermines network governance by sending messages to the workforce about their role and place – i.e. that networks exist to meet centrally-imposed targets in a prescribed way. This risks becoming a self-fulfilling prophecy, if networks adapt processes and structures to meet nationally-dictated ‘guidance’.

NPM driven by central government is a direct contradiction to network governance: it undermines basic network governance concepts of trust and autonomy. It might be possible to pursue NPM, but allow networks to choose processes, structures, priorities, performance criteria, etc. This has not been done in either case study.

Overall, it can be concluded that NPM, as practised currently, is a contradiction and a hindrance to network governance. Its reduced trust, adherence to central control, reluctance to allow local variation, dependence on narrow measures of performance; all these hinder autonomous and interdependent networks. Instead, networks become implementation arms for government – a form of hierarchy in which central government decides, and networks merely implement in a prescribed way.

This concludes the discussion area of NPM and governance. The next section pulls together the conclusions from the four discussion areas, to provide an overall view of the evidence from the case studies concerning network governance.



## **Overall conclusions on network governance**

The research set out to explore CSPs in two case studies. The following are overall conclusions about network governance, drawn from ten dimensions that formed the original definition, collapsed into four discussion areas:

### **Agency and structure**

Network governance is partly about the balance of agency versus structure. Agency, or personal relationships, matters more at operational level; structure is more influential at strategic level. Structure is an on-going process: how it is supported and directed is influential. Context also matters – structure can influence where it fills a previous vacuum; where significant structures already exist, changing to new structures matters less.

‘Structure’ is often defined as arrangements between and within organisations; coherent silos of responsibility, accountability and resources. However, ‘structure’ has a further important meaning – the physical location of those involved. This is significant in defining traditional structures of ‘who does what’, and developing personal relationships between agents.

Existing ideas focus on an iterative relationship between agency and structure, but not the level at which this takes place. Agency matters more operationally, structure matters more strategically. This implies that future theory development needs to tease out agency/structure balances at different network strata - the balance is not the same throughout.

Also, ‘structure’ needs to be seen in a wider sense. Examples of co-location among agencies might be cost-cutting or avoiding duplication; it has an impact beyond this, and onto the nature of a network. Changes felt by individuals (agents) moving to co-location (altered structure) were significant. Network governance theory needs to adjust its thinking – currently it views structure in organisational charts and frameworks.

### **Separation from government**

Neither case study in the research conducted fits fully with theoretical models of network governance, despite containing many elements of it. There is insufficient separation from government, and a lack of genuine autonomy and trust; this does not suggest true network governance. Government (less true of WAG) continues to control networks directly, using funding criteria and inspection as indirect control. This is somewhat counteracted by a large co-located network, which has sufficient critical mass to move partly away from central direction. The degree of autonomy is limited – NPM-style performance management, and central direction of strategy and process, remains significant. Respondents felt micro-managed and trammelled by government edict: they sought to circumvent NPM to respond more effectively locally.

The continued influence of NPM supports the view that initial hopes for network governance dominance were overstated. In some ways this is odd; agencies within the network are committed to basic government policy aims – disagreement and central control resides in delivery. There is no evidence that agencies would – if not for centralised control – abandon the concept of community safety, or seek to undermine it. Central control is government timidity and lack of trust, not a specific fear of policy sabotage: it goes to the heart of government opinion of local services. It implies government feels local agencies cannot be trusted, lack key skills, and will either drift or fail.

The findings suggest network governance theory needs a deeper and more nuanced consideration of networks as they operate in practice, to use in theory development. Networks have little autonomy in innovation or ‘ground up’ policy development. Autonomy is something that networks snatch and evolve where governments are not looking, not something flowing automatically simply because networks exist.

Government trust to network appears limited – there is considerable control and retrospective checking. Between network agents trust is generally built up over time, but this process is speeded by co-location: the key structural issue of co-location is significant but understated in network governance theory.

There is little trust or network management vertically; communication is top-down from government, with little flow upwards. Network governance theory needs to adapt to this reality. Existing theory assumes that governments wish to trust and advance autonomy, so networks operate within a vertically integrated structure. The reality is messier and partial: networks exist on their own strata, with a vacuum between them and national government. This gap is less evident in Wales because WAG has a smaller control span; it is clearer in England.

### **Network dynamics**

Despite little trust or autonomy, partnerships can sometimes operate entrepreneurially; despite the governance process, not because of it. Innovation uses gaps in governance, exploited by partnerships: it is not encouraged by a hands-off steering governance system.

Interdependence between partners is higher where there is more shared experience, and commonalities. In looser partnerships interdependence is nominal, not real and important. The concept of openness needs to be seen afresh – it is less related to network culture and more to support structures for new entrants, and the degree of genuine partner working from the outset.

It is clear from the research in the case studies that negotiations about resources depend critically on three factors, which emerged from the research –

- Is the discussion about opportunity cost, or real cash?
- Do overall resources for the network already support core activities?
- Is the discussion around optional and informal work, or fulfilling contractual obligation?

A common thread is, once again, the degree of co-location. Innovation is easier when agents can regularly discuss options, and support systems are readily available. These support structures facilitate entry and exit as significantly as any culture of ‘openness’ or

being ‘welcoming’. Interdependence is also fostered by sharing location; it enhances shared experience and common purpose.

For network governance theory, this implies that co-location is a further crucial element in the extent and nature of the network. The impact of physically being alongside others is underplayed at present.

### **Governance and NPM**

Continued NPM measures by government hinder network development. NPM creates a self-fulfilling prophecy, suggesting hierarchical control is appropriate and inevitable, even where formal networks are established at government behest. The danger is that agents assume they are an implementation arm to be directed and monitored, and that structures evolve to reflect this. NPM militates against full network governance.

Our understanding of network governance theory needs to react to this duality of role, by producing further ideas on evolving ‘hybrid’ networks. These may have some network structures implying autonomy and innovation, but operate within prescription and NPM measurement. They may lack the full extent of theoretical network governance, but more explanation is needed of how they adapt. The case studies show this adaptation may be ‘active’ or ‘passive’. Derby City adapted actively, exploiting economies of scale and critical mass to develop new systems (e.g. developing their domestic violence unit). But Carmarthenshire adapted passively, ameliorating differences between WAG and Home Office on policy and performance targets.

Overall, CSPs exhibit many criteria for network governance, but mainly in internal workings and dynamics. Government thinking towards partnerships is too prescriptive and centrally-controlled for full models of network governance. Instead, they are ‘hybrid’ networks – operating in network governance when centralised government permits. Government action limits this; it is interesting to note how networks attempt to operate within (or circumvent) centralisation. The case studies indicate that the degree of co-location of network members is crucial (and under-considered) in network operation and development.

This concludes the section on network governance, taking the individual dimensions and grouping them under four discussion areas. This process will be repeated in the next section, where the 16 dimensions of PSE are collapsed into five discussion areas.

## Public Service Ethos: Discussion Area 5 Public Interest

<i>Discussion area</i>	<i>Dimension</i>
<b>Public interest</b>	<b>Accountability</b> <b>Public interest</b> <b>Wider and longer thinking</b>
Impact of governance	Degree of trust Impact of NPM processes Role of commissioning/contractual work
Impact of organisation	Socialization vs self-selection Cultural-specific Impact of working level Outcomes/processes/traits Variance
Impact of individual	Loyalty Motivation Personal values
Ethos comparison	vs voluntary sector vs public sector ethos

### ***Dimension 11: Accountability***

Pratchett and Wingfield (1996) defined two key criteria for accountability. The first – expecting to operate within a legitimate democratic process – varies slightly between the two case studies. Carmarthenshire has developed cautiously, evolving gradually without becoming a separate entity. This also reflects the proximity of regional government and partnership. In Derby City processes and structures for accountability have become (at

best) opaque. It is unclear how, and how much, the partnership is accountable; less accountable than its individual organisations. The partnership is neither fully partnership nor organisation – operating on the margins leads to confusion on accountability.

Abiding by legitimate democratic processes is another accountability issue to be considered. In Carmarthenshire, a number of agencies feel public accountability is not really a factor (certainly not at strategic levels). These agencies think that WAG's processes confer democratic legitimacy on subsequent priorities; or that local priorities should be decided 'on behalf of the public' by expert and experienced agencies. Lowndes and Sullivan (2004) termed this a mistaken view of 'delegate democracy': involving delegates becomes a proxy for community involvement. Carmarthenshire's view is patrician: the public servant knows best, and the public is the recipient. Such an approach does not totally subvert public interest, but implies a narrow definition of it: public interest can only be decided by dispassionate public servants, not the public.

Derby was concerned about perceived democratic deficit: the seeming absence, or looseness, of accountability arrangements. A willingness to abide by processes was there – the processes were hard to find. Part of this seemed to stem from the evolution of the partnership into a quasi-organisation – a process that appears to have outgrown existing accountability mechanisms without replacing them. In addition, there remains confusion about accountability by individual partner organisations, and the accountability of the partnership as an entity.

Comparing case studies suggests several implications for PSE. Proximity of partnership to regional government may, paradoxically, lessen accountability. The regional government (democratically elected) is deemed to hold a legitimate public mandate and have undertaken democratic consultation: the policy is deemed to have 'built-in' accountability before arriving at the partnership. A degree of patrician thinking remains; accountability is deemed innate in the policy already, and so less overtly demonstrated through consultation or feedback.

Partnership genesis and evolution is significant in how accountability develops. Carmarthenshire's gradual evolution allows existing accountability processes to prevail. Derby City's new quasi-organisation means new forms of accountability have not been

created. Accountability is thus ad-hoc not systematic; PSE is undermined by the partnership's lack of obvious accountability mechanisms.

Pratchett and Wingfield's (1996) second criterion was that public servants should be expected to act independent of personal views. This was harder to discern: both case studies felt they were implementing nationally-decided priorities. They were dispassionate in their acts (though Hoggett (2006) argued public servants take failure personally), but personal motivations, value systems and philosophy play a significant role. There is no suggestion of seeking personal gain; the question is a complex one about acting dispassionately. Public servants are implementing national policy without fear or favour, thus behaving neutrally. But other personal factors such as motivation, value systems and philosophy are accepted by respondents as influential.

Hill and Hupe (2007) argued further: the street level bureaucrat faces many different accountabilities (administrative, professional, participative), and steers a course between them. Munro *et al* (2008) feel the public servant's role of community representation must be mitigated by navigating political and practical considerations to 'get things done'. The evidence from the research supports this – respondents hinted at discomfort with democratic deficit; they recognised professional pressure to act; they thought about jurisdiction and administrative boundaries. The mix of these differed between case studies, suggesting structure plays a role in accountability. Where co-location transforms partnership into a quasi-organisation, it may lead to less accountability; the partnership grows without putting formal accountability mechanisms in place.

The problem of branding and credit was evident in Derby City. Some felt the partnership, in evolving, had begun to claim credit for successes due to other factors, or the efforts of individual partner agencies (or their funding). 'Stealing of thunder' was causing resentment and friction. Alternatively, the partnership was more effective at branding, more responsive, lighter on its feet; the problem was partner agencies not claiming credit, rather than the partnership usurping roles.

Lowndes and Skelcher (1998) see credit-taking as a network needing refreshment or re-generation – competition for credit signifies competition for the 'reputational resource' of public credit. Derby City suggests it is less 'refreshing' and more political expediency.



An accountability loop is the crux of the issue. All the agencies (including the partnership) have performance partly judged by government on scores from public surveys, asking how that agency performed in creating a 'safer community'. Part of the organisation's prestige, image, performance and subsequent treatment by government (including future funding) depends on association with perceived success and progress. Who takes credit becomes more important than before. This is anathema to the concept of partnership - the partnership is funded and resourced by partner agencies; yet competes with those agencies for limited public credit. Proactively creating a brand identity, public association with particular projects, mutual connection of websites; all become live and pertinent issues. It also generates public confusion about who 'owns' or is responsible for what; this, in itself, undermines accountability.

There are implications for PSE. Community becomes a source of 'reputational resource' – the public decides who gets the credit. Competition for limited public attention and appreciation militates against PSE; it encourages narrow and short-term behaviours to secure that year's public satisfaction. Projects that are long-term, 'under the radar', or benefit smaller groups, risk being sacrificed. Credit-taking behaves like any narrow and specific performance target, by damaging PSE.

Carmarthenshire touch upon another accountability issue: the inexpert public. Some argue that agencies and partnership should decide priorities, because the public lack the expertise, knowledge, or access for informed and rational decisions. This supports Dibben, Wood and Roper (2004, in Haqle 2007); 'customers' of public services lack knowledge or power. It hints at a continuing patrician view.

The accountability issue raised in Derby City – that central government control undermines local accountability – is covered in discussion area 4, assessing NPM impact on PSE. However, it supports the view of O'Toole (2006); when public servants become deliverers of results, public accountability is reduced.

### ***Dimension 21: Public Interest***

Farnham and Horton (1996) suggest that government hierarchical control is directly opposite to the public interest, steering public bodies towards 'measurables' and away

from complex concepts like ‘public interest’. This is echoed by Haqle (2007), and by Grimshaw *et al* (2003); emphasising measurable and short-term aims is incompatible with the wider and deeper ‘public interest’. Thompson (2006) goes further; when organisational goals are the focus, wider ethical and societal considerations inevitably fade, undermining ‘public interest’.

Thompson (2006) also contends that managerialism limits discretion at lower levels. Fragmentation accompanying managerialism limits organisational cohesion and learning opportunities – prevents an organisation gelling, developing meanings, or sharing history. Carmarthenshire has followed this path, remaining a loose and fragmented partnership structure. In Derby City the opposite has taken place: faced by managerialism unfiltered by regional government, dominated by a strong performance management culture: Derby City responded by building a quasi-organisation. This partnership has been criticised by some for having a cohesion all its own, and for how it has innovated. In Thompson’s terms managerialism produced a backlash, bringing institutional meaning and cohesion into structures intended to deliver central targets.

Some prioritisation of objectives and resources will be done by professional public servants; the public lacks information, strategic overview, or expertise ( Pratchett and Wingfield 1996, Sullivan *et al* 2006). The public servant ‘assumes’ (through reasonable deduction where possible) what is in the public interest, on the public’s behalf. Baggott (2002) notes the difference between public interest being the populist view of the majority about what it wants, and a professional and paternalistic judgement by the elite. On closer examination, this may not be what is going on: respondents did not cite practical difficulties in consultation. Instead, the assumption was more patrician. The case studies move away from Pratchett and Wingfield’s (1996) assertion, towards a greyer area of public officials assuming ‘they know best’. This clearly contrasts with Klijn and Skelcher’s (2007) idea of ‘public interest’ as an outcome of discourse and policy enactment. In these case studies there was little discourse: policy was not contingent on public mood or ideas, nor were the public seen by professionals as having sufficient expertise to contribute in this way.

Commentators such as Lipsky (1980) and Hoggett (2006) have focused on public interest as less a display of altruism (as LeGrand (2003, in Hoggett *et al* 2006) had suggested),

more a process of balancing individual need against societal need. Alternatively, public interest and overt enthusiasm might be incompatible (Du Gay 2008). But throughout interviews, and despite prompting, almost no respondents mentioned these balances. They felt their role was to implement organisational objectives efficiently. Notwithstanding professional, ethical and care considerations, this was seen as compatible with societal interests: *if each organisation achieved their democratically legitimised objectives, society would benefit as intended*. This relates to public servants' narrow vision under NPM: they see their role as completer-finishers of pre-ordained policy, and efficient conduct of this role would, *ipso facto*, further the public interest. None had asked, or had been asked, to consider the wider perspective. This is further explored in Dimension 26 below.

For Farnham and Horton (1996) or Haqle (2007) this focus on narrow delivery is a neo-liberal approach, where society is an aggregation of individuals (or individual groups). It also reflects the views of Du Gay (2000) or Brereton and Temple (1999); that society is best served by effective meeting of smaller goals. It may be a narrow focus of the workforce. But even at higher levels the focus remained on completing processes and objectives, not on a trade-off between individual needs and wider public considerations. McDonough (2006) steers between the two extremes of opinion, arguing that public interest is malleable; its flexibility marks it as a meaningful concept, and not a notion that is blindly clung to, or instantly dismissed.

Overall, pursuing 'public interest' was not significant for interviewees until mentioned in interview: not in daily interactions or thinking. Instead, a near-proxy was considered – pursuit of organisational objectives, national performance targets, and local responsiveness, on an almost ad-hoc basis. Many felt achieving these at a micro-level would, over time and across organisations, produce an 'inevitable' pursuit of the public interest. The potential dichotomy between short-term/micro/individual aims and the wider/longer/societal/communal benefit was not considered.

### ***Dimension 26: Wider and longer thinking***

This dimension links to the dimension of public interest, and has many common elements. Shacar (2000, in Du Gay 2008) believes public officials should display a moral compass beyond their job; including ethics, morality and philosophy. Others do not go

that far; Du Gay (2008) rejects the argument, but agrees government desire for 'enthusiastic' public servants may negate the dispassionate individual who sees beyond the immediate.

Carmarthenshire suggested the tone of accountability was changing from generalized accountability for strategic performance, towards local accountability for neighbourhood day-to-day measures. There is a genuine attempt at accountability to the public through local interaction, reflecting the lives of the public (and issues affecting their quality of life), and driving front-line staff. But it also invites shorter time and space horizons; a presumption that neighbourhood and short-term matters. For staff and supervisors longer-term and wider thinking becomes less necessary, and potentially counter-productive. If the trend towards neighbourhood accountability continues - whatever the other benefits – it lessens consideration of the longer term.

Little or no attention is paid by public servants in either case study to wider societal issues, major social changes, implications beyond organisation or partnership, or setting precedent: these issues lack focus, passion, or traction. This narrow view limits how much 'public interest' drives partnership's work. 'Public interest' includes considering wider, longer-term and deeper societal interests; this thinking is not taking place at these levels.

This concludes the section looking at the three dimensions of public interest: the next section draws these threads together.

### **Discussion Area Five: Public interest**

Overall, all three dimensions (accountability, public interest, wider and longer-term thinking) are pre-requisites for genuine PSE. This section draws the three dimensions together, considers connections and their collective impact on PSE. This produces the following conclusions:

Accountability is changing. Centralised control dilutes it; neighbourhoods focus it into smaller packets. Accountability for organisations reduces overall, but increases for some

individuals. The outcome is that accountability has less impact on individual ethos, because it is more peripheral. Accountability is less direct and more oblique; chains of command and responsibility more complex and blurred – for the individual it is less important (formally) than previously.

A new and rising issue around accountability concerns credit. Organisations measured according to public perception of improvements regard ‘who takes the credit’ as a more important factor. This militates against PSE - it encourages competition between public services; implies a zero-sum game; encourages shorter-term thinking around perceived and visible benefits; and discourages longer-term or subtle improvements.

‘Public interest’ is no longer a significant factor influencing thinking among public servants. There is little attempt to balance community and individual needs; instead, the view is that societal benefit can (and will) be secured by effectiveness at individual level. This may create high-quality services at a micro-level, but undermines PSE by reducing wider and longer-term thinking. The focus on professional and high-quality ‘customer experiences’ ignores how the individual fits into a wider system.

As a corollary, shorter-term thinking prevails throughout the organisation, including those with strategic responsibilities: this is partly the result of consistent messages, guidance and requirements from successive governments. The Crime and Disorder Act 1998 spoke of longer-term planning and root causes not symptoms; implementation has favoured short timescales and focus on individual, sectional or (occasionally) organisational need. Evidence suggests this trend will continue.

There was little ‘public interest’ in the classic sense of considering wider societal benefit and issues while dealing with the individual. An almost neo-liberal view now prevails among the case study interviewees (subconscious, not a positive philosophical choice). This view states that individual excellence (satisfying ‘consumer’ or ‘client’ demands) will, inevitably, achieve planned societal gains. The expectation is that aggregating individual experiences produces a positive community outcome.

This section has highlighted the conclusions from the discussion area of public interest. The next three discussion areas take an increasingly narrowing view of PSE: from government, to organisation, to individual. The first of these is impact of governance.

## Public Service Ethos: Discussion Area 6 Impact of governance on the PSE

<i>Discussion area</i>	<i>Dimension</i>
Public interest	Accountability Public interest Wider and longer thinking
<b>Impact of governance</b>	<b>Degree of trust</b> <b>Impact of NPM processes</b> <b>Role of commissioning/contractual work</b>
Impact of organisation	Socialization vs self-selection Cultural-specific Impact of working level Outcomes/processes/traits Variance
Impact of individual	Loyalty Motivation Personal values
Ethos comparison	vs voluntary sector vs public sector ethos

### *Dimension 14: degree of trust*

Trust in public services flows in many directions – between government and public bodies; government and public; public bodies and government; between public bodies; or between public bodies and public. Each has its own dynamic and resonance.

Plant (2003) identified seven types of trust within public service; he believed government had failed to identify and safeguard these. Plant felt some public services had trust

intrinsic to the service itself – e.g. the public had to feel trust in policing to believe personal safety was being delivered. This, Plant (2003) argued, made trust in CSPs especially important. Plant (2003) also distinguished between trust and confidence, claiming trust concerned face-to-face service and day-to-day matters. Confidence was broader: relations between public and government not service deliverers.

O'Toole (2006) focused on Civil Service arrangements, making broader points about PSE and trust. O'Toole argued government managerialism reduced trust, making public servants deliverers of pre-ordained programmes, not policy-makers with a wider perspective. He also felt the implicit contract between public servants and politicians had been broken, diminishing trust: this was symptomatic of overall government philosophy, irrespective of political party.

Evidence from the research suggests public services are more interested in inter-agency trust, than trust implied by government action, or other types of trust. Some implications of this were considered under 'public interest'. The lack of concern over government trust in public servants represents weary acceptance - it is low and unlikely to change; almost a *fait accompli*.

There was little interest in the trust of the public in public services. This lack of interest runs counter to PSE notions of a sense of duty to the public, public accountability, and consideration of public trust.

### ***Dimension 15: Impact of NPM processes on the PSE***

NPM was discussed in detail under network governance dimensions. Here the focus is on whether NPM is increasing or decreasing, and the implications for PSE.

Lawton (2004) argued that NPM had changed the prevailing ethos in four ways:

- increased regulation caused less reliance on personal integrity, and less trust from government
- erosion of previous organisational structures created fragmentation and chaotic delivery



- managerialism and policy changes the landscape – professionals are exposed to other ethos’ and have less of a sense of vocation
- individual character is changing; this affects PSE because public administration has moral and ethical elements to it

Lawton (2004) focuses on behaviour becoming prescribed - the presumption of regulation. The case studies demonstrate government micro-management, a focus on process, a ‘tick-box’ mentality in both policy and audit, and inherent lack of trust from government. For PSE, these factors clearly undermine the trust implicit in the ethos; by the assumptions and consequences of the approach. At a micro-level the evidence is more opaque - many individuals worked with little regard for higher-level NPM: their focus supports PSE (by ignoring or avoiding NPM) and undermines it (by reducing horizons, focusing on individuals not community).

Haqle (2007) argued that NPM undermined PSE by emphasising short-term process and output targets, and because NPM implicitly mistrusted public servants. Maesschalk (2004) disagrees: NPM needn’t undermine ethical behaviour - it affords greater freedom to act on behalf of clients. Merali (2003) suggested NPM and PSE can co-exist, provided NPM changes ‘go with the grain’ of the prevailing ethos. However, Denhardt and Dehardt (2000) disagree with this, claiming NPM ignores significant factors like public interest: until this is addressed NPM and PSE cannot co-exist.

Farnham and Horton (1996) see NPM as a direct contradiction of PSE, undermining concepts like equity and altruism. They see commitment to NPM as shallow, but introduced strongly enough to supplant PSE with a managerialist ethic of efficiency and effectiveness. Farnham and Horton argue NPM and PSE are mutually incompatible. Thompson (2006) agrees: NPM reduces moral and political content within public life, undermining collective orientation and consistency as it does so. Brereton and Temple (1999) have countered by arguing that exposure to NPM drives up public service standards: a key component of public service efficiency and value.

Evidence from both case studies indicates a strong mistrust of the tenets of NPM among interviewees. Instead, the research offers firm evidence that PSE and NPM cannot co-

exist, since NPM undermines some aspects of PSE and doesn't support others. There is in NPM an absence of the wider perspective, consideration of public interest issues, accountability, and long-term thinking implicit in PSE; and evidence that governmental NPM attitudes affected this. NPM's impact has come over many years; there is a 'grinding' down of previously approaches, gradually undermining factors like trust or autonomy – evidence is not instant, but cumulative.

Buelens and Brock (2007) suggested NPM was less effective for senior staff, because incentives and rewards implicit in NPM were a lower priority for senior management. Plowden (1994) noted political accountability still dominated public service, despite NPM; what emerged balanced individual consumerism in NPM, and public accountability.

The research showed that front-line staff had limited ability to ameliorate policy impact and adjust processes. But at senior levels there was greater embracing of NPM notions; a reluctance to change policy; and acceptance that NPM measures were an immovable status quo. There was no evidence of senior managers questioning, arguing with or ignoring government edict and follow-up. By imposing top-down policy and processes, senior managers have come to view policy as carrying inherent accountability: i.e. government's mandate confers accountability on policy, so no additional accountability is needed (especially with Carmarthenshire/WAG).

Clarke (2004) suggests NPM assumes that private concerns have primacy: intrinsically at odds with PSE's public primacy assumption. Introducing NPM is diluted, Clarke argued, by public reluctance to abandon completely community and social cohesion. Cribb (1997) claims notions of efficiency in NPM are (by definition) value-free: they run counter to notions of 'public good' which include an ethical or moral standpoint.

Clarke's (2004) point suggests that public primacy retains some traction – there is little evidence of this. The lack of discussion of wider perspective, or attempt to define 'public interest', suggests community cohesion is either not paramount or ignored. Cribb's (1997) point is relevant: there is a presumption of efficiency that holds sway, at the expense of moral or ethical issues. Respondents explained this was the direction of management, policy, audit and funding. Respondents felt that efficient conduct of policy

at a micro-level would automatically lead to societal benefit at the macro-level; there need be little discussion of societal good.

The evidence from the case studies is that overall NPM has created too much focus on 'measurables' –the emphasis is on process not outcomes, short-term not longer-term. NPM creates an organisational drive to do what is short-term and measurable: this cannot fit with PSE, which must look beyond job descriptions, or organisational requirements. PSE must focus on the societal, the community, and the longer term – NPM, as it stands, misses this.

How NPM has been introduced – and its rhetoric – has damaged morale, and been perceived as an attack on public servants. This will not create the longer-term vocational attitudes implied by PSE. However, on a personal level the impact of NPM is more limited. Face-to-face work often proceeds unhindered by performance indicators or business plans. NPM's role has limits; respondents themselves are ambivalent about its impact. Commentators mentioned PSE's resilience, and how it can resist ideological challenge from NPM – some evidence here supports this view.

### ***Dimension 22: Role of commissioning/contractual work***

Contracting out or commissioning work varies in importance through the partnership - evidence is therefore more limited on this dimension.

Some commentators query the benefits of contracting and commissioning. Plant (2003) argued contracts are rules governing behaviour, and compete against systems based on trust, and mutual interest: contractual arrangements must alter behaviour. Grimshaw *et al* (2003) agreed; contracts removed the opportunity to act in the public interest, even if the will remained. Contracts undermined accountability and trust, reducing activity to rules-based compliance. Hunter (1998, in Laffin 1998) argued commissioning created a clearly separate professional grouping, undermining group cohesion. Brereton and Temple (1999) saw benefits in commissioning: formalising activity increased transparency and professionalism. The focus on customers, not nebulous ideas of public interest, made it more responsive and democratic.

Derby City, with its centralised opportunity for specialist administrative and project support, emphasised increased planning and scrutiny from commissioning. Carmarthenshire talked of the greater importance of cash decisions, and implicit power in cash budgets. Neither partnership was concerned with wider implications. This may simply be workers focusing on their work. But it implies that, whatever stems from commissioning and contracting, those involved will not consider the wider impact.

If those implementing contracts don't consider wider notions of public benefit, someone else must, for PSE to survive. But Carmarthenshire did not, and Derby City rarely did so; the latter felt it was part of more general political thinking. Public interest considerations were not 'built-in' to contractual arrangements: the focus was on delivery of identifiable outcomes defined by contractual terms. If anyone considered wider implications, it was assumed again that effective individual behaviour would automatically lead to wider societal gain. Commissioning is not, of itself, harming PSE. But it will harm PSE when implementation ignores wider and longer-term considerations. Commissioning plus NPM and short-termism, is a recipe for damaging PSE.

This section has looked at the three dimensions making up the discussion area. The next section pulls these ideas together.

### **Discussion Area 6 Impact of governance on the PSE**

The discussion area takes context in its broadest sense – the influence on PSE of governance structures and processes above the organisation. Partnerships are profoundly influenced by government behaviour and direction. Differences in governance structures between Carmarthenshire and Derby City formed a criterion for case study selection.

Looking at these three dimensions (trust, NPM and commissioning), and assessing the research data from the case studies, the following conclusions can be drawn:

Trust is important for PSE – especially trust between public and public servants. Public servants see trust in inter-organisational terms, or government trust in public services. This undermines PSE by ignoring public elements of trust

NPM, and how it was introduced, have damaged PSE. It reduces opportunity for staff to demonstrate PSE attributes like equity of service, altruism, and consideration of public good. It does so by narrowing the field of play, replacing integrity and trust with contractual terms, shortening horizons, and implying that meeting individual need will (aggregated) secure wider societal benefits

While NPM has damaged PSE, individual resilience remains. However, this stems from ‘professional pride’ and commitment to clients; these often erode longer-term thinking and wider societal consideration, and lack management or governmental support.

Commissioning and contracting can be positive, imposing greater discipline and planning on spending decisions. However, enacting agreements undermines PSE – it erodes personal trust, reduces capacity, and encourages a limited, individualistic approach. Contracts enhance neo-liberal aspects of efficiency, but at the expense of PSE.

This concludes the analysis of the discussion area. The next section assesses the next tier of analysis – down from governance, to the five dimensions of the organisational level.

## Public Service Ethos: Discussion Area 7 Impact of organisation on the PSE

<i>Discussion area</i>	<i>Dimension</i>
Public interest	Accountability Public interest Wider and longer thinking
Impact of governance	Degree of trust Impact of NPM processes Role of commissioning/contractual work
<b>Impact of organisation</b>	<b>Socialization vs self-selection</b> <b>Cultural-specific</b> <b>Impact of working level</b> <b>Outcomes/processes/traits</b> <b>Variance</b>
Impact of individual	Loyalty Motivation Personal values
Ethos comparison	vs voluntary sector vs public sector ethos

### *Dimension 12: socialization vs self-selection*

Concepts of PSE contain on-going debate about how individual attitudes and values have developed, and the context within which this occurs. Commentators agree there are socialization and self-selection aspects; they disagree on the dynamics/balance. Development combines attitudes and values within individuals before joining an organisation; and organisational pressure from shared meanings, understandings, contexts, approved and ‘appropriate’ behaviour, after they join. The latter is termed

‘socialization’(Becker & Connor 2005); the former is ‘self-selection’ i.e. the individual gravitates towards somewhere reflecting or encouraging his/her basic belief system.

McDonough (2006) identified a ‘public service habitus’ – generalised and internalised conceptions among public service workers about public good trumping private interest. NPM inhibited the development – or even existence – of PSE. McDonough (2006) suggested this means PSE is a constantly-adjusting attitude, not a pre-formed and fixed standpoint. PSE is thus exhibited in everyday behaviour; not a set of ideas mapped onto public servants. Derby City interviewees see PSE in everyday behaviour, and so visibly a motivating factor. Derby suggests a high degree of self-selection, but Carmarthenshire does not.

Case studies reflect these differences in operation. Derby City’s well-established, large quasi-organisation is something individuals apply to, as employees or secondees. This deliberate choice reflects a belief that the partnership embodies their existing attitudes. Derby City’s internal structures support the status quo, socializing the self-selection and cementing existing philosophy. Pratchett and Wilson (1996) contend that close groups of professionals exhibiting PSE demonstrate an ethos more professionally-based than public-facing altruism. Derby City’s structures and peer pressure support this contention.

Carmarthenshire partnership is more loosely structured, with few secondees; most work on partnership issues either as a corollary to usual work, or an aside from it. Motivations and philosophies are driven more by reasons for joining their original job, than thinking the partnership embodies their personal values; no conscious decision is made, as it is in Derby City.

Self-selection’s domination over socialization depends on the organisational development; the degree of co-location (which dictates the impact of prevailing culture), and whether individuals feel the partnership is more important than their organisation.

PSE could be strengthened by a quasi-organisation explicitly stating PSE assumptions and intentions, distancing individuals from their original organisations; and by commitment to such values forming part of recruitment or performance criteria.

Conversely, PSE could be undermined by scant attention to it; by acceptance of a myriad of intentions, attitudes and motivations; or by imposing a different culture such as NPM.

Overall, evidence from the research suggests stronger socialization where the partnership is a quasi-organisation; instilling a more uniform culture, recruiting like-minded staff to reinforce this culture.

### ***Dimension 13: Cultural-specific***

Analysis must be conducted into the context of the organisation – structures within which it works, and the local or regional setting. This is because the partnerships do not exist in a vacuum – they must interact with, and make sense of, their context.

Most studies of cultural specificity look at national considerations – no-one has studied regional variations. Becker and Conner (2005) argued overall national culture affects the impact of socialization (socialization was stronger in a homogenous society such as Japan, where conformity was important). Pratchett (1999) noted that, while western societies may hold similar basic tenets, interpretation of these tenets allowed for national variability in issues such as accountability or leadership. Chapman (1993, in Pratchett 1999) supports this with an example of Swedish freedom of information rules, and the greater ethical considerations compared to the UK.

There are several differences between Cardiff and London; most notably, Cardiff's more laissez-faire approach. However, overall there is no evidence of significant impact from regional culture on PSE. Cultural differences between nations (Becker and Connor 2005) are much greater than cultural differences within the UK.

### ***Dimension 16: Impact of working level***

The varying working levels of respondents (e.g. front-line, supervisory, managerial) offer an insight into organisational strata's influence on PSE.

Lipsky (1980) developed significant theory around his concept of the 'street level bureaucrat'. Lipsky argued that the front line has the greatest capacity to demonstrate



PSE. They would use their autonomy and knowledge to bypass certain rules, bend procedure, adapt policy to produce results, and balance individual client need with organisational requirements. Many respondents support the basic idea that front-line staff exhibit PSE; the further from the front line, the less prevalent PSE becomes.

Maynard-Moody and Musheno (2000) believe street level bureaucrats operated as ‘citizen agents’; Lipsky maintained they were ‘state agents’. The difference is motivation, not action – wanting to work for the individual in front of them, or implement state policy pragmatically. In the case studies, individual loyalty and duty of professional care was geared towards individual clients, not wider communities. Respondents supported Durose’s (2009) argument that bureaucrats can operate as ‘civic entrepreneurs’ on behalf of clients: they felt motivated ‘to make a difference’; but this difference would be at a micro-level. They did not see their role as considering wider policy implications. Neighbourhood managers in Derby City saw themselves co-ordinating a variety of interests, but this was the only evidence of ‘civic entrepreneurs’.

Nielsen (2006) went further, in claiming there was no inherent conflict between individual need and organisational need: ‘street level bureaucrats’ often found win-win scenarios instead of mitigating conflict. Nielsen suggested the social interactions within organisations were crucial; a positive atmosphere boosted the chances of a co-operative outcome. This gives a social context to changes made by front-line staff, above the organisational or policy context; Derby City felt that management in-fighting was a barrier to PSE, and demonstrated PSE was less likely at senior management levels.

Buelens and Broek (2007) looked at motivations of public and private sector workers, and found working level to be significant – as important as public/private sector differences. On closer examination they felt this was due to motivation of job content; working level was a secondary indicator identifying job content. Both Derby City and Carmarthenshire felt front-line contact with clients, and the resultant satisfaction, underpinned PSE. Both suggested that working at senior management level removed that contact and satisfaction, and made it harder to retain PSE.

Overall, commentators feel that working levels which allow focus on individual clients, provide the sort of job content that encourages a motivated worker (though the resources

available can be a crucial determinant). The case studies support this, but do not definitively assert how this translates into PSE.

A motivated workforce, committed at individual level to improving services and quality of life, implies that PSE is harder to demonstrate further from the front line. But PSE is about more than professional individual client care: this ignores wider public interest and longer-term thinking. It is significant that front-line workers do not view such factors as being part of PSE – their view is that PSE is demonstrated by committed and professional service at the front line.

### ***Dimension 19: Outcomes/processes/traits***

Distinguishing how organisations try to influence PSE allows a more refined analysis. For example, organisations stressing traits may look wider and longer-term than organisations prioritising processes. In line with respondents' own classification of activities and judgements, 'influence' was split into outcomes (results of activities); processes (means of carrying out activity); and traits (individual values and character of staff).

Hoggett (2006) for example - focus on process, and argue that public service is a bureaucracy operating within areas of public dilemma; processes mediate between conflicting aims and desires, and demonstrate an appropriately ethical process. Hoggett (2006) argues process is vital: it is a framework for ethical behaviour, a means of resolving or ameliorating problems, and of managing expectations. Unlike Lipsky (1980), Hoggett (2006) sees this as the responsibility of the whole organisation - public service has several overlapping and contestable tasks; 'process' is how this is managed.

While both case studies support Hoggett (2006) in a general sense, the origin of the primacy of process is an issue. Hoggett (2006) felt process is a necessary means of dealing with conflict and anxiety. The case studies emphasise government's insistence on process as the prime mover. Indeed, they show that process is 'inherited' from above, being the main component of government communication of its wishes, and audit and inspection to ensure compliance.

In terms of PSE, this difference matters. If public services *choose* to use processes (and are seen to do so), it implies PSE forms part of their thinking: they are attempting to maximise overall societal good, even at individual inconvenience. But if stressing process is *government edict*, it implies public service lacks the will or means to resist: they are implementing government thinking in a prescribed manner. The latter falls short of PSE, lacking autonomous thinking or genuine accountability. The evidence is that process is inherited from government in a ‘hierarchy by network’ way; it takes considerable effort to depart from prescribed government processes.

Hoggett (2006) also believed that process allowed the public to see fairness and equity. But if process is inherited from government, process may lose this attribute: process is not about being seen to be fair and correct, but about behaving within government parameters. The distinction robs process of its ethical aspect, and therefore its role in accountability. There is no evidence that processes dictated by government were based around equity or ethics; more around convenience, consistency across geography and time, and perceived ‘efficiency’.

Brereton and Temple (1999) argue that traits and outcomes should be interlinked; desirable traits are such because they lead to desirable outcomes, not because they are somehow morally ‘right’ or ‘just’. In the case studies, outcomes were an overall determinant; government did not work backwards from desirable outcomes to see which traits might elicit them. Government expected process, not trait, to decide outcome. Therefore government saw little reason to consider desirable traits in public servants – government felt if the correct processes were followed correctly, the ‘right’ outcomes would result.

Derby City, however, demonstrated the significance of traits; respondents attributed greater importance to underlying belief systems, less to notions of public services as arbitrators between conflicting demands. Derby saw these traits as commitment to excellence and public duty; intrinsically desirable, and a precursor to producing desired outcomes.

The corollary for PSE is that Derby City felt traits (pre-existing or learned) were intrinsic to PSE, whereas commentators (e.g. Brereton and Temple) suggest traits are a means to the end of desirable outcomes. If the latter is correct, traits are ‘movable feasts’ and only matter where they impact upon outcomes. If the former is correct, traits need to form a potent part of recruitment and prevailing culture (Elcock 2012), since they have value to PSE in and of themselves.

### ***Dimension 23: Variance***

CSPs comprise a number of partner organisations, each with their own history, culture, and partnership role. The dimension assessed whether there were material differences between partner organisations, in how they worked within the partnership (and therefore influenced the PSE of partnership workers).

Pratchett and Wingfield (1996) argued that change had moved at different paces for different public sector agencies, often because of exogenous change – ‘outside shocks’. The case studies demonstrate that the organisations furthest and fastest down the road of partnership working are local authorities and police forces. They were pushed first, and hardest, by original legislation and government follow-up. They continue to have the strongest influence on partnership culture, creating tensions as new joiners change the external climate around partnership.

Merali (2003) linked NHS organisational culture to the concept of isomorphism; defining it as resilient, resistant to outside change, and similar throughout NHS services. NHS respondents in both case studies felt their work could easily continue if the partnership ended – they saw few examples of synergy. Such resilience, argues Merali (2003) exemplifies the durability of fundamental NHS culture, and explains why it pushes against a more inclusive partnership ethic.

Buelens and Brock (2007) argue that, in partnerships, staff focus more on individual job content than the exact nature of their employer organisation. In the case studies, respondents claimed their job would be unhindered by higher-level changes; also, that the

voluntary sector could do the job with less bureaucratic interference. Both responses suggest dominance of job content over organisation.

Clarke and Newman (2001) argue that NPM has become an institution creating change and chaos. It exacerbates variance between public bodies, because how much NPM becomes institutionalised depends on these differences. NPM becoming the 'setter of the prevailing rules' magnifies differences such as power bases, political constraints, or public support and awareness. Variance increases in line with the growing institutionalising of change processes such as NPM. The case studies support this – the primacy of police and local authority within the partnership has not diminished: it has become entrenched as the partnership develops.

Overall, the case studies support the idea that different organisations develop at different speeds and retain different cultures. Melding them into partnership has required compromises, but many organisations kept their culture and are at 'arms' length' from the partnership culture. Job content and NPM remain strong determinants of variance within partnership.

For PSE this means individual variations - and variations between organisations - remain strong; there is little evidence of one pervasive culture across the partnership. Variance is strongly linked to job content, and NPM exerts continued pressure upon the partnership. Both factors militate against the wider, longer-term aspects of PSE. The case studies suggest variance is driven by individualistic factors – these cut across communitarian requirements of PSE thinking.

This section has looked at five dimensions which contribute to the impact of the organisation on PSE. The next section draws together the lessons from these five dimensions.

### **Public Service Ethos: Discussion Area 7 Impact of the organisation**

In the second of three contextual discussion areas, the level of analysis has moved from overall governance, to organisation. The term 'organisation' here means a partner organisation, or the partnership itself. This section assessed how organisational factors

impact upon the PSE of those involved. While recognising individual and governance factors, some conclusions about organisational influence can be drawn:

The extent of socialization cementing or altering pre-existing personal values depends partly on structure. Where individuals make a conscious choice to join an organisation (or partnership), socialization's impact is strong. Where partnership work bolts-on to existing work, impact is diluted. This extends to PSE itself: it is more affected by socialization when the individual has chosen to join the group, and so accept the prevailing ethos.

Working level within a hierarchy affects PSE, obliquely. Seniority restricts client contact, ability to see outcomes of work, and ability to demonstrate PSE to colleagues. Working level affects job content, which affects PSE. However, this underplays wider and longer aspects of PSE, which seniority can permit.

Processes are important but usually inherited from government control, not freely chosen. They restrict the demonstration of PSE, but individual value systems can allow some freedom from this.

This concludes the discussion area of impact of organisation. In the third of the three 'impact' discussion areas, the focus moves to the impact of the individual on PSE. This is explored in the next section.

## Public Service Ethos: Discussion Area 8 Impact of the individual

<i>Discussion area</i>	<i>Dimension</i>
Public interest	Accountability Public interest Wider and longer thinking
Impact of governance	Degree of trust Impact of NPM processes Role of commissioning/contractual work
Impact of organisation	Socialization vs self-selection Cultural-specific Impact of working level Outcomes/processes/traits Variance
<b>Impact of individual</b>	<b>Loyalty</b> <b>Motivation</b> <b>Personal values</b>
Ethos comparison	vs voluntary sector vs public sector ethos

### *Dimension 17 Loyalty*

The case studies did not provide any evidence that individual loyalty was changed by anything beyond the work or organisation of that individual: be it wider society, notional public interest, or balancing community and individual interests. This section examines the implications of this evidence.

Farnham and Horton (1996) suggest loyalty within PSE is altered by NPM, which fosters loyalty to a culture of 'deliverables' and 'consumer focus'. Buelens and Broek (2007) felt job content and work/life balance were key factors for public servants, indicating a pattern of increased individualism within loyalty, grouped around self-development and intrinsic satisfaction with work content.

But differing concepts of individualism yields different consequences. For public servants individualism means loyalty to work not organisation (or partnership); a loyalty restricted by contractual processes. Loyalty to wider society is not considered. For the public, individualism means being a 'consumer' or 'client', not part of a wider collective.

The Audit Commission (2002) found loyalty towards work relied on different factors than reasons for leaving it. The Audit Commission found greatest loyalty was towards 'making a difference' (supported here, especially by Derby City); however, this is not the same as a PSE, which holds a wider view of who benefits and what must be considered. 'Making a difference' can be to individual clients, not a wider commitment to societal gain.

Pratchett and Wingfield (1996) argue public servants have many loyalties (employer, profession, institution, community) which change over time and circumstance. What signals PSE is not loyalty to this or that, but how conflicting loyalties are managed – i.e. adaptation and adjustment. The case studies suggest multiple loyalties (e.g. the 'two masters' issue faced by some in Carmarthenshire). But this is evidence of political loyalties and accountabilities: loyalty to community or society is rarely mentioned. Instead, professional loyalty is seen as a proxy; by doing a professional job and being loyal to work, one is automatically serving wider society. This view prevails among interviewees, but neglects a wider argument – one can be highly professional, provide an excellent service to individual clients, but hinder society by neglecting wider permutations and possibilities. Especially at strategic level, professional loyalty may hinder cross-sectional working, leading to service gaps or missed opportunities.

Cribb (1997) argued NPM has shaped loyalty by directing it towards organisations, not society. But in the case studies the shift is to loyalty towards work content and professionalism (more individualistic), less towards organisation. NPM measures driving



loyalty towards organisations may produce a backlash, and rebound towards individual and work content.

Overall, 'loyalty' in the case studies was largely individualistic, professionally-based, geared towards job content and client satisfaction. This resulted partly from NPM focusing on process-led performance management, which invites this micro-level attention. Respondents felt loyalty at individual and highly local levels. This undermines aspects of PSE that require wider and longer-term awareness – long-term loyalty to society and community. The public contributes to this by wishing to be individual consumers or clients, not part of larger society. On both sides, little attention is paid to potential sacrifices or compromises inherent in a short and narrow view.

### ***Dimension 18: Motivation***

Like Farnham and Horton (1996), the Public Administration Committee (2002) believed NPM undermines public service motivation. For the PAC this is due to pace of change, and lack of consultation and planning in implementation - less the direction, more the process - which hinders PSE by misdirecting effort. Wright (2007) believed public sector motivation was taken for granted and assumed, not evidenced and nurtured.

The case studies, on the other hand, suggest many staff in Carmarthenshire joined the public sector for pragmatic reasons: most in Derby did not. The difference is stark: potential explanations are explored below.

Lewis and Frank (2002) suggest altruistic motivation is limited, often restricted to particular workers or work areas. Lewis and Frank found altruistic motivation was higher for existing staff than potential entrants, possibly because of cultural pressures within the public sector; or changing attitudes in society - new entrants reflect current thinking, existing staff previous ideas. It may link to Hoggett *et al* (2006): altruism is one of many attitudes within public servants, and cannot be isolated to imply causality. Park *et al* (2008) support the notion that PSE is part of a wider set of values. Buelens and Broeck (2007) suggested motivation at senior levels was different to junior levels, because personal priorities changed with seniority.

The case studies do not demonstrate differences in general motivation by seniority. Derby City's view fits more with McDonough's (2006) - public servants have a genuine belief in what they do. Derby City felt almost everyone has an altruistic element to their motivation; the question is why Carmarthenshire feels differently? The explanations for this situation are as follows:

- as a looser partnership, individuals are not fully aware of colleagues' motivations, but in Derby City close proximity means they are aware
- the quasi-organisational nature of Derby City's partnership fosters and perpetuates altruistic intent
- Derby City recruits secondees and volunteers – the high degree of altruism reported is self-selection
- Derby City gives more opportunity to display individuals' ethos, so motivations are clearer, better known, and easily reinforced
- the job market is significant: in Carmarthenshire the lack of a thriving private sector makes public sector a default choice, not a positive one

Overall, the case studies show that motivation to 'do good' and 'serve the public' did not necessarily reflect underlying motives for joining the partnership. Respondents did not always view partnership as the best way of demonstrating this motivation. Differences between cases studies suggest structure and partnership evolution significantly affect motivations of those within partnerships. Motivation is both individual (i.e. unique to that person) but also *individualistic*. This does not mean there is no altruism; merely that altruism appears at a micro-level. Again, for PSE this implies the absence of wider considerations, focusing instead on demonstrable personal and professional performance.

### ***Dimension 20: Personal values***

Lawton (1998) looked at personal values within wider societal developments, as well as individual behaviour. Lawton argued that individual personal values are one of four dimensions that shape PSE development. Lawton also noted the influence of modern attitudes towards public life and behaviour – apparent contradictions and double standards that impact upon public service. Attitudes towards ethical behaviour, standards

and morality constantly fluctuate: public services reflect this. The Audit Commission (2002) noted personal values related to aspects of work, not the sector.

The research for this thesis partially supports Lawton's (1998) view. Personal values are considered very important: so important that they transcend many organisational aspects, and are therefore viewed as enduring. Derby City considers personal values more prevalent, important, or nurtured, than Carmarthenshire. Staff give personal values a higher priority and influence than Lawton does, implying a more enduring definition of PSE because extraneous factors are given a lower weighting.

Lewis and Frank's (2002) work suggested personal values were less important predictors of public sector behaviour than factors such as gender, voting intentions, or personal contacts. This suggests membership of certain population groups is as important to PSE as personal values. Grimshaw *et al* (2003) also cited the importance of individual social context in shaping values, prior to (or independent of) the employer culture. The enduring view of respondents is that personal internal values are the most important factor and can, within limits, overrule other factors.

The research shows that commitment to PSE values is highly personalised, but internal values are vital. This implies socialization and organisational culture are less important than values held when joining: these values are hard to change once entrenched. This suggests the current state of PSE, while shaped by many factors, will only change slowly.

This section has looked at three dimensions of the individual, and how they might affect the PSE. In the next section, these threads are drawn together for a wider perspective.

### **Public Service Ethos: Discussion Area 8 Impact of the individual**

This discussion area looks at the role of individual traits, characteristics and attitudes in shaping ethos. Here, the focus is on the personal.

Loyalty has become more individualistic, though not more selfish. Loyalty is largely from individual to work agenda – it thus (partly) transcends organisation, context, or time. It remains altruistic in intent, but is narrower and more individual in application.

Loyalty partly reflects wider societal trends (e.g. ‘customers’ with ‘rights’) away from a general collective or individual sacrifice. Other factors include the importance of work/life balance and staff welfare; and constant public sector reform. These diminish PSE by narrowing loyalty, focus and ambition; but strengthen general altruism and desire to ‘make a difference’.

Sharp differences in motivational reasoning between case studies are illuminating. They suggest that motivation is personal, but highly influenced by contextual elements such as the local private sector, or cultural pressures of co-location.

Motivation is described as altruistic by many interviewees, but this form of altruism is partly professional pride; partly a belief that doing a ‘professional job’ will, *ipso facto*, produce ‘public good’. The connection between professionalism and public good is hazy, depending on intervening factors. Despite this, many felt their personal values were a crucial part of their work, and endured change: many clung to these values during times of uncertainty.

This concludes the look at individual factors impacting on PSE. In the fifth discussion area, the focus switches to comparisons between PSE and two other ethos’, beginning in the next section with a comparison to the voluntary sector.

## Public Service Ethos: Discussion Area 9 Ethos comparison

<i>Discussion area</i>	<i>Dimension</i>
Public interest	Accountability Public interest Wider and longer thinking
Impact of governance	Degree of trust Impact of NPM processes Role of commissioning/contractual work
Impact of organisation	Socialization vs self-selection Cultural-specific Impact of working level Outcomes/processes/traits Variance
Impact of individual	Loyalty Motivation Personal values
<b>Ethos comparison</b>	<b>vs voluntary sector</b> <b>vs public sector ethos</b>

### *Dimension 24: Voluntary sector*

Plant (2003) observes that voluntary organisations need not (but can) operate impartially; the public has a different sense of their impartiality (and lower expectations) than the public sector. Plant also notes the voluntary sector is less bound to universality (unless written into contractual arrangements) than the public sector. Derby City's experience supports these ideas – volunteers fulfil an important niche, but are not obliged to consider

equity or wider social issues. The same is seen in Carmarthenshire, on a smaller scale: there is less interaction with voluntary groups generally, and it is restricted to a few areas of work such as drug rehabilitation.

Lewis and Frank (2002) found similarities between public and voluntary sectors – specifically, a mutual interest in altruism and sense of higher purpose. But the case studies suggest caveats – the voluntary sector’s right to omit some activities; limited application of vocation or altruism; lack of continuity.

Voluntary organisations – while fulfilling important roles and demonstrating altruistic intent – do not fulfil many PSE criteria. They can ignore notions of equity and universality, so do not have wider and longer thinking inherent in PSE. Some respondents felt they could demonstrate PSE more effectively in a voluntary organisation, because they would be ‘free of bureaucracy’. This view implies that first, they see bureaucracy as a direct hindrance to exhibiting PSE; second, they believe PSE is demonstrable without commitment to universality or equity of provision.

The Audit Commission (2002) noted PSE was bound more in job content than job context; voluntary staff could be as committed to PSE as public servants. The case studies highlight limitations of this idea. The voluntary sector is a niche operator, where aspects of PSE can be exhibited individually; but is under less pressure (and is less able) to exhibit broader PSE elements such as wider societal impact, reflecting Plant’s (2003) notion that working alongside the voluntary sector would change (possibly damage) PSE.

Cooney (2006) suggested where the voluntary sector is a hybrid (with either private- or public-sector), that organisation has inherent tensions. Structures within both case studies (public sector commissioning of voluntary sector activity) exemplify this. The clearest tension lies in public sector responsibility for long, continuous and universal service, with voluntary organisations potentially ‘cherry picking’. In both case studies this has been avoided, through contracts specifying universality. The case studies also showed that longevity - and service continuity - by voluntary organisations cannot be guaranteed, due to short-term funding.

So it can be concluded that, at best, the voluntary sector can provide many aspects of PSE (by no means all) over the short or medium-term, but rarely long-term. Respondents' answers crystallised some aspects of PSE that previously received little mention (i.e. universality, longevity, and the wider thinking this implies): and implied that they feel their own bureaucracy hinders PSE.

#### ***Dimension 25: Public sector ethos***

The 'public sector ethos' is subtly different to PSE, though there are overlaps. The former focuses on public organisations being self-justifying: looking to retain the status quo, enhance existing power bases, assume primacy, and reject change. Comparing the two allows greater insight into PSE, and what influences it.

Brereton and Temple (1999) envisioned a new 'public sector ethos' as a viable alternative to traditional PSE. They argued a public sector ethos could use efficiency and effectiveness as positive values: as custodians of public money, public servants should be obliged to operate in the most efficient manner. They felt private sector involvement could help; marketization and customer choice would be positive parts of a new ethos, not a threat to PSE.

There is little evidence from the case studies of this taking place. Where efficiency is prioritised, it is seen as NPM imposition; 'public sector ethos' may be a defensive response to this. Brereton and Temple (1998) propose that public servants should embrace recent changes, and engaging would improve the ethos while retaining its basic values. The case studies do not suggest that public servants wish to do so, or are doing so.

The Audit Commission (2002) suggested a 'public sector ethos' may be more visible from employer than employee. For the Audit Commission, public sector ethos attitudes lay with management and government, not front line staff. Evidence within the case studies supports this; respondents identified these characteristics at organisational or governmental level, not individual level.

The Public Administration Committee (2002) noted that 'public sector' and 'public service' were not synonymous. It suggested an ethos is embodied in organisational

culture, not the sector. Where partnership culture is strong (Derby City), there is little evidence of ‘public sector ethos’, according to respondents. Where partnership culture was less established (Carmarthenshire), more examples of ‘public sector ethos’ were mentioned.

Laffin (1998) points to increasing professionalisation of public services and public servants as a potential source of a new ethos, where protection of professional certainties is significant. This is not synonymous with *professionalism*, and may militate against PSE by encouraging more individualism and less altruism. Laffin observes this at the meso-level (i.e. between governmental and individual levels), and speculates that a gap between professional elite and de-professionalised service deliverers may result. Both case studies suggest respondents see themselves increasingly in professionalized terms, but without a professional elite detaching from service deliverers. The gap observed is of easier demonstration of PSE when dealing with clients than with strategy – detachment relates to job content, not organisational level or professionalization.

Overall, while the case studies provide evidence of professionalization and a public sector-based resistance to change, there is not widespread evidence of a ‘public sector ethos’. This lack of evidence suggests PSE is not under threat by a public sector assumption of primacy; nor is professionalisation taking over. However, respondents do reinforce a perspective that PSE can only be genuinely demonstrated at front-line level; and that PSE is about individual service, not about the wider collective.

This concludes the section outlining the comparison with voluntary and public sector ethos – the next section draws these points together.

### **Public Service Ethos: Discussion area 9 Ethos comparison**

Evidence from the case study research suggests the following:

The voluntary sector can embody some aspects of PSE just as capably as the public sector, especially at the individual level, where commitment and passion may be easier to display (because of a lack of bureaucracy and other inhibitors). But at organisational levels, similarities are less distinct. The voluntary organisation is less obliged to consider



wider society, longer-term aspects, or broader policy implications: it operates as a niche player. The benefits of the voluntary sector are accepted, and it overlaps the public sector in many elements of PSE; but at individual level, not an organisational one

Evidence suggests some elements of ‘public sector ethos’ are present, often as a defence mechanism to ‘imposed’ change. However, partnership culture is crucial. Where partnership has gelled into a quasi-organisation, there is little evidence of ‘public sector ethos’. This suggests organisational culture is the critical issue, not government-imposed change, or exposure to private sector values.

This concludes each of the five discussion areas under analysis for PSE. The next section looks at the findings from all five discussion areas and the 16 dimensions contained within them, to provide some overall conclusions about PSE.

## Overall conclusions on public service ethos

The main focus of this study is the modern PSE – how it developed, where it is changing and why; and how working in a partnership might impact. The following conclusions about PSE can be drawn:

Accountability has altered: no longer public servants being held to account by the public, it has become more subtle and nuanced than this. Notwithstanding the pragmatic difficulties of an inexperienced public, accountability is reduced by increased central government control – especially on prioritisation and appropriate performance targets. Accountability is an important aspect of PSE.

A new and important aspect of accountability is credit. In moving away from crude process-led performance measures, public services now focus more on public perception as the bellwether. In partnerships this is problematic: partners jockey for share of the credit, and become *de facto* competitors, not partners. Policymakers have not anticipated this; it reduces accountability and altruism – both elements of PSE.

Few public servants in the case study interviews mention the wider ‘public interest’. It is not required as part of their thinking. Instead, a neo-liberal stance is adopted – excellence towards individuals aggregates to positive societal benefit. This stance ignores social connectivity, unintended consequences, and other wider and longer-term considerations. The lack of wider consideration of the public interest is damaging the PSE.

Linked to the public interest issue, damage to the continued development of a robust and coherent PSE also stems from the fact that wider and longer-term thinking is not part of senior staff roles: it is assumed to be government’s prerogative. The focus is ever-narrower: neighbourhoods are considered a more appropriate level for accountability; strategic decisions are handled at government level. This infantilises senior staff, reduces them to implementation without wider consideration. As such, it damages PSE.

Loyalty is seen in individual terms: loyalty to work area and providing a professionally expert service. There is less loyalty to larger groups such as community. Assumptions are

made that professionalism and commitment to ‘making a difference’ equate to PSE. This indicates shorter-term and more limited thinking than a genuine PSE.

Personal values are highly significant to respondents. But while they reflect altruism and professional pride, there is no wider thinking and longer-term consideration. Values relate to personal performance, and rarely include broader concepts of connected community. How much PSE is self-generated or socialized varies: strong organisational structure makes socialization significant - staff consciously chooses to move to that work area, rather than assimilating partnership aspects into everyday work. Even here, it overlays existing personal belief systems: this raises questions about whether PSE is changing partly due to overall social factors – e.g. less deference, more individualism, consumer focus, and greater access to information.

PSE is perceived as better exhibited on the front line than in senior management: respondents feel PSE is demonstrated by care, service and consideration towards individual clients. There is no perception that PSE can be demonstrated by wider strategic thinking about connections between policies, anticipating and meeting emerging social trends, or sacrificing short-term expediencies for greater good. These are not part of contemporary understanding of PSE.

Government focus upon process – in policy, performance measurement and inspection phases – militates against PSE. It does this by underplaying the role of traits and outcomes in setting, managing and delivering high quality public services. It invites short-term focus on narrow ‘measurables’, and for staff to ignore wider, deeper and intangible elements.

Discussions on trust provide further evidence of narrow thinking. Trust is seen as inter-organisational; i.e. impinging on the individual’s ability to deliver professional services to clients. Trust from government is mentioned obliquely; trust by the public barely mentioned. This indicates the focus of most staff, which in turn reflects their management, and messages from government. This narrow view of trust does not support PSE: it creates a short-term, narrowly-focused emphasis on inter-organisational factors; this ignores wider, longer, communitarian and societal factors.

Overall, evidence from the research in these case studies suggests NPM undermines PSE. NPM zeroes in on measurable processes; discouraging altruism, equity of service and consideration of wider societal needs. It also encourages short horizons, short timescales, and emphasis on proof by audit trail. However, NPM is patchy and disparate in implementation, allowing some PSE elements to continue.

The voluntary sector has a different approach to the public sector: the difference is important – especially if the coalition government wishes to replace parts of public service provision with voluntary provision. The voluntary sector has less continuity, shorter timescales, less inclination towards equity of service, and is not the ultimate ‘service of last resort’. These distinctions allow voluntary organisations to act without many elements of PSE. PSE may be exhibited in many ways at an individual volunteer level; at the organisational level, there is less pressure to do so.

This chapter has drawn together views of respondents and those of theorists and commentators. Both network governance and PSE have been analysed, but separately. In Chapter Nine, some wider conclusions are drawn, and network governance and PSE are discussed alongside each other.

## **CHAPTER NINE: CONCLUSIONS, AND THE FUTURE OF PSE IN NETWORK GOVERNANCE**

### **Introduction**

The research on which this thesis is based clearly demonstrates how the complex relationship between network governance and PSE can be explored, by focusing on the dynamic of that relationship in the context of partnership arrangements. Specifically, the thesis explored the relationship through detailed case studies of Derbyshire and Carmarthenshire.

The former is a CSP developing gradually into a quasi-organisation with political influence, serving a predominantly urban population. The latter is a loose affiliation, working partly in an ad-hoc way without co-locating services, serving a sparse rural population and operating under regional government (the Welsh Assembly Government).

These case studies provided data that enabled analysis of PSE and network governance within two different partnerships: there were significant variations in history, political impact, governance, tiers of government and degree of service integration, between the two case studies. These variations existed despite the fact that both partnerships were created by the same primary legislation – the Crime and Disorder Act 1998. The different evolutions, expectations, structures and processes for each case study permitted an assessment of how PSE and network governance were affected by these factors.

PSE as a concept has developed over the years, as the context within which it is located has altered. That alteration has taken place because of shifts in perceptions of what public services should do, and how they do it: this has changed thinking about PSE. For example, the introduction into PSE definitions of an absence of profit motive is relatively recent – it grew as public services became privatised, or changed to agency status, or were encouraged into private sector partnership. Partnerships as an overt policy aim lent a further shift in government thinking - towards collaborative services, communitarianism, consideration of social equity - allowing a re-assessment of PSE under such circumstances.

Likewise, network governance is a relatively new concept that has gradually found the mainstream, but requires analysis to assess its fit into current public policy frameworks. Network governance seeks a new form of structure and process that must be overtly developed; otherwise, it becomes a slightly-adjusted form of previous governance forms.

Chapters 1,2 and 3 set the scene by looking at academic evidence and theory of network governance and PSE. The thesis refined each concept outlined in literature into discussion areas and dimensions: both derived directly from academic research and theory. Chapter 4 set this in context with an exploration of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998, and the creation of CSPs. Chapter 5 outlined the choice of methodology – semi-structured interviews to gain respondents' views of partnership and the extent of PSE within it. Chapters 6 and 7 then examined each case study in turn, looking at PSE and network governance using direct experiences and quotes from respondents. This evidence was assimilated into Chapter 8, which synthesised evidence from each case study, comparing the experiences of respondents.

It is now time to draw together the threads of the evidence from the case studies, and the analysis conducted. Overall conclusions can now be drawn about network governance, PSE and the interplay between them. The chapter also suggests how theory needs to move forward.

The first section of the chapter looks at network governance, and how much (and in which ways) it is demonstrated within the case studies. It then assesses the potential impact on network governance theory. The second section does the same for PSE. Finally, a third section offers thoughts for the future of PSE.

## **Section 1 – Network Governance**

Part of the reason for selection of CSPs as case studies was their overt embodiment of network governance elements within public policy. The influence of network governance thinking on policy was explicit. In reality, introducing partnerships was messier than theory: real life intervened. Some organisations joined in slowly; some were not obliged to join until recently. Implementation coincided with hindering or influential factors, affecting the purity of transition from theory to practice. The case studies provide four important lessons for our understanding and conceptualisation of network governance:

### ***1 Structure is a process***

Partnerships demonstrate structure as a process; constantly evolving, driven as much by government activity and enforcement (through funding, policy and inspection) as by network members. This evolutionary process is demonstrated throughout – Derby City cited prescribed processes and micro-management by government; skewing of structural options through funding requirements; retrospective imposition of processes through audit. Carmarthenshire demonstrated how ‘serving two masters’ (WAG and Home Office) highlighted their different requirements and preferences; mismatches between WAG and Home Office made finding appropriate structures more difficult.

Agency enjoys a symbiotic relationship with structure (though it remains difficult to fully define that relationship), so it follows that the influence of agency also fluctuates over time. Both case studies demonstrated the importance of human relationships and communication, but structure underpins this importance. Derby City showed how agency changed when structures changed; Carmarthenshire showed re-structuring to include some co-location changed the nature of agency for those partners.

Structure can be defined as hierarchy, power relationships, communication mechanisms, and accountability processes. But a further structural aspect dominates the case studies – physical structure. Evidence from the case studies shows that the degree of co-location is crucial in network dynamics and development. Derby City displayed greater cohesive thinking, more innovation, and stronger staff connection to the partnership – respondents cited physical co-location of partners as a principle reason for this.

That said, agency remains critical in network *operation* (not establishing or planning). Despite a complex environment, there remains a key role for both individual talent and staff co-operation. Structure can significantly influence this, but remains secondary when gauging overall impact on partnerships: agency remains the key ingredient for network effectiveness. Both case studies felt interpersonal relationships delivered what structure had made possible.

PSE is often taken as an individual and internal motivator, able to enhance agency (and individual relationships) more than structure. Dominant agency therefore gives more opportunity for PSE to flourish. But structures can cement ideas and organisational culture, allowing PSE to endure. The key is not the mere existence of agency and structure, but the choice of direction. Structures and agency can be geared to support PSE or hinder it, depending on the underpinning aims driving development.

## ***2 Partnerships are not separated from government, but are arms of it***

The case studies clearly demonstrated highly centralised governance: processes micro-managed or dictated in detail, objectives and performance targets set centrally, parameters and inspection criteria based on a ‘one-size-fits-all’ approach. Partly this reflects national political structures, but it matters in terms of network governance. Genuine networks would demonstrate some independence from government; innovation and policy creation locally; semi-autonomy from centralised thinking - factors almost totally absent in both case studies. We see limited evidence of innovation or genuine local consultation; where it occurs there is pride in achievement and increased commitment from staff. Partnerships in the case studies are multi-agency implementation teams, rarely departing from government requirements. The premise extends beyond the case studies, speaking to a general government approach and attitude – that public services are largely funded centrally not locally; should be controlled and directed; are not to be trusted with autonomy.

There is a broad consensus across the public sector on the main policy issues - what they are, the desirability of tackling them – but below this is argument about means and tactics. Central government holds the power and purse-strings; it imposes strict controls



via funding, policy requirements, and process-driven performance measurement. Such micro-management from the centre is not diluted or diffused by any intervening body. It is exacerbated by the lack of any mechanism feeding ‘up the chain’. Network governance theory argues networks should impact upon government: there is no evidence of this taking place in either case study.

What is clear is that government also exercises ‘retrospective control’: using audit and inspection to examine results or probity levels, and to enforce particular processes. These may not be overtly mentioned in policy ‘guidance’, but audit and inspection expect them to be there; if they are not, the consequences are politically and financially damaging. Inspection requirements become *de facto* policy, applied retrospectively.

For PSE, the lack of autonomy and freedom to innovate are damaging. In both case studies (especially among senior staff), the government view is presumed to embody wider societal good, as if government has done that thinking for public servants. Therefore public service thinking is less strategic, less about wider societal implications, and less creative at individual or organisational level. A public servant enacting government requirement is not exhibiting PSE – he/she may demonstrate many elements of it, but this is incidental. PSE is not present because some elements of imposed behaviour coincide with it; it must be more conscious than this. Commitment from respondents to providing good service and ‘helping people’ is clear; but they often fail to see or think beyond a job description, their own department, or the current year. The absence of such wider and longer thinking makes their behaviour efficient, effective, well-intentioned and committed: but not PSE.

### ***3 Partnership development depends on shared experiences***

The case studies demonstrate that partners within networks are capable of developing interdependence and trust. In the case studies they did so at different speeds: the differential reflected the degree of shared experience. Derby City developed a tighter, more cohesive network with greater co-operation on shared projects, shared resources, and common intent. Carmarthenshire evolved more slowly and organically, lacking the critical mass or political pressure from WAG to move quicker.

Co-location of staff within the partnership was vital: partners developed better understanding, mutual interests, shared responses and collective memory in an integrated environment. This was demonstrated by new entrants to partnerships. Successful integration by Derby City relied on infrastructure, and opportunity for immediate and involved co-operation; not simply an entrant-friendly general culture. Carmarthenshire's looser arrangements meant longer to integrate and contribute. Partnership development is shaped profoundly by structure, even though ultimate performance depends on agency.

Partnership development is further illuminated by resource decisions: likely to become more important in the next few years. Network dynamics altered when decisions became about expenditure and/or contractual arrangements (as opposed to 'opportunity cost'). Derby City felt decisions became more careful, nuanced, dependent on evidence, and politically-charged. Carmarthenshire believed contractual arrangements altered the dynamic: client/provider relationships replacing an in-house team mentality. As government increase voluntary and private sector involvement in public services, this trend will grow. The result is that consensus is less common, the potential for conflict raised; there will be less shared experience and greater competition.

It is evident that more frequent contractual relationships, and discussions around cash budgets not opportunity cost, is damaging for a robust and coherent PSE. These processes discourage trust, reduce autonomy, and encourage shorter-term and narrower thinking. It suggests compliance with requirements is sufficient; not altruistic and wider perspectives beyond immediate operational needs or short-term organisational aims. Compliance culture is not conducive to the thinking required for PSE.

#### ***4 NPM is a direct contradiction to network governance (and to a PSE)***

Part of the issue of NPM in networks and partnerships, is how NPM is implemented. Successive governments (including the coalition) couch NPM in language that undermines some basic tenets of co-operative public services. NPM rhetoric displays a distrust of the public sector: that the public sector is moribund, self-serving, lacking innovation, and requires significant micro-management. NPM reforms (often poorly, partially or haphazardly introduced) were conceived and implemented from the top-down, forcing changes that fundamentally challenge PSE.

NPM undermines some principles of network governance – trust between network members (and between network and government); autonomy to implement locally under a broad national agenda; rewarding co-operation not competition. NPM runs counter to explicit policy aims to introduce semi-autonomous partnerships, producing local solutions to local problems. In both case studies, prescriptive centralised policy and performance measurement, funding tied to specific processes, restrictive audit and inspection: all undermined the idea of network governance.

In doing so, NPM also negated some aspects of PSE. PSE requires government trust of public servants; basic respect for their work; accepted motivations of public good not personal gain; autonomy to allow them to do so; a lack of micro-management or focus on process. NPM damages PSE in many of the ways it damages network governance.

### **Developing network governance theory and public policy**

The research and thesis offers a number of lessons for the development of contemporary network governance theory. This section draws on those practical lessons, and suggests how network governance theory can adapt to new circumstances.

It is clear that structure looms large for network governance theory: commentators debate its exact role, the relationship to agency, and how structure can influence network development. This debate has previously focused on intangible structure – rules, procedures, ‘organisational maps’. In Derby City, structure was also physical: co-location made it a quasi-organisation with subsequent dynamics, identity, cultural memory and potential for isomorphism. Carmarthenshire’s co-location was more limited. The boundaries between co-located network and full organisation are important – signifying changes in structure, role of agents, response to external shocks, degree of synergy, and internal dynamics.

Network governance theory has yet to clearly define the border between a close network, and a full organisation. The border may lie more in self-definition than external observation: i.e. if those involved believe it is an organisation, treat it and identify with it as a cohesive single unit: then it has become an organisation.

Network governance theory will gain depth and predictive ability when it looks harder at how theoretical notions play out on the ground. Theory suggests that network governance is a necessary and almost inevitable response to the complexity of 'wicked issues'. But the 1997 government faced an identifiable wicked problem in community safety: it had widespread political consensus, a benign financial situation, a supportive media (at least initially), and a popular mandate - yet this government did not implement effective network governance. Instead, it produced a multi-agency implementation team - 'hierarchy in disguise' - with micro-management, a lack of trust, and limited interdependencies.

Full and genuine network governance may be impossible to implement in the messy real world. Networks are subject to the political expedient of reluctance to let go; services operated by network are still seen, by public and media, as being provided by government. If so, network governance theory needs to acknowledge this limitation, and present network governance as a model not an explanation – as economic theory does with the model of 'perfect competition'. This presentation would allow theoretical development, without undue claims about how this operates in real-world conditions.

Equally, government must continually and clearly clarify its aims for the partnership agenda. What currently exists is a messy halfway house that offers the worst of both worlds. Policy makers need to decide if they are brave enough to allow genuine network governance in their partnership approach, or not. If so they need to genuinely devolve power, free up finances and improve local accountability; this involves accepting 'postcode lotteries', media criticism and other pressures to intervene. If not, they need to embrace the benefits of other approaches – greater consistency, cross-subsidies, and economies of scale. At the moment, policy makers are 'enjoying' diluted versions of each approach.

## **Section 2 – Public Service Ethos**

Part of the implications of partnership working for PSE has been discussed in the previous section. In this section, PSE is examined in more detail: how PSE reached this current state, and implications for the future.

### ***1 Accountability - a dynamic***

Accountability forms the bedrock of public servants' relationship to the public. The research within the case studies clearly shows that notions of accountability are changing: this has implications for the PSE.

Firstly, accountability is going local: increased emphasis on highly localised teams and how they engage with, and are accountable to, relatively small local populations. Carmarthenshire especially was keen to develop this highly-localised communication and response. Simultaneously, there is less stress on organisation-wide accountability to the public. Instead highly localised accountability is deemed, when aggregated, to form a district-wide or regional accountability. This mirrors neo-liberal notions of aggregating individual service to provide society-wide improvements.

Secondly, as partnerships move towards a quasi-organisation, accountability reduces: partly because quasi-organisational partnerships getting results are seen as dynamic and intrinsically responsive. Reduced accountability also stems from constitutional confusion – if partnership are groups of partner organisations, does accountability lie with partnerships, or with individual organisations? Derby City in particular grappled with this problem. Structures for overcoming this confusion were not considered when legislation was introduced: they remain issues now.

Thirdly, who takes credit for performance is a new and important issue. As government moves from crude process-led performance measurement, it uses popular opinion as an alternative. Public confidence levels now form overarching indicators. Organisations want public credit for their work, to enhance their survey scores. This runs counter to notions of pooling resources, expertise, and praise/blame. The partnership itself becomes a competitor for limited public attention and available credit. Partners are pitched against

each other, instead of co-operating (especially if the partnership becomes a quasi-organisation). Add to this an inexperienced public (with media-led opinions, and a lack of knowledge) and the recipe is for reduced, not enhanced, co-operation (and public engagement/commitment). Derby City found that partner organisations objected to the partnership's high profile: they became reluctant to share resources, offer secondments, or lobby for funding, without arrangements about credit-taking being clarified.

Accountability is a key element of PSE. Exactly how it is delivered, who is accountable to whom and under which circumstances, matters. It matters because the present situation represents a number of problematic dichotomies. Partnerships must co-operate for the public good, but compete to demonstrate they are operating for the public good. They must think long-term and beyond the individual to demonstrate PSE, but accountability is increasingly short-term and localised.

Both case studies demonstrated managerialist drift towards increasingly competitive accountability, central government requirements for localised and short-term responsiveness, and performance management focusing on process not outcome. This drift works against PSE: it may have intrinsic merits, but this does not mean it benefits PSE - or the public good in a long-term and societal sense. Instead, the drift reflects narrower thinking, short-termism and focus on 'measurables'.

PSE theory needs to incorporate these drifts in accountability. It is still possible to maintain an implicit bargain between society and public servants, when accountability is a resource to be contested. But for it to be possible, other accountability measures need to be strengthened. Public servants can demonstrate they are acting in the public interest, when the corollary of that action is enhanced credit for their organisation. But only if credit is a minor measure of their worth, and not a primary one. As Derby City found, if accountability is another limited resource to be competed for, it is hard to convince the public their interests are being served, when they see organisations and partnerships focused on securing a performance indicator of 'public appreciation'.

## ***2 Whatever happened to 'Public Interest'?***

The concept of public interest is central to an understanding of how PSE develops within changing circumstances, structures, dynamics and policy. At no point in the research did 'wider public interest' emerge unbidden. In both case studies it is no longer discussed, mentioned, or form a significant part of public servants' thinking. It is not communicated by senior managers; does not form part of contractual terms; is not included in documentation or training. Two ideas stem from this evidence.

Firstly, wider public interest no longer motivates. When it was suggested management could use wider public interest as a motivator for staff, the response was largely cynical – seen as manipulation without genuine belief; or a proxy for other, less palatable, reasons for change. There is a strong motivation to 'do good' but constantly referenced in micro-terms – doing good for the individual, or small group, or within limited time frames. The wider public interest is not a motivator, because it is not present in public servant thinking or discourse.

Secondly, if consideration of the public interest is not present among respondents, it is difficult to see where it *is* taking place. Perhaps government now does this thinking: some respondents think (or assume) so. Senior management took the view that wider societal interests had already been considered by civil servants and politicians in framing legislation, policy and directives. Senior managers felt this was the appropriate place for such thinking.

If public servants abrogate responsibility to consider public interest, believing it is government's role, this implies public interest will never form part of their thinking: the need to meet government requirement will always be paramount (since government requirement 'must' already include public interest). Both case studies focused readily on meeting government targets and following prescribed processes: no-one queries if such action cut across the public interest. It follows that public servants will not ask the public about the public interest. But if government is not overtly considering wider public interest (instead considering resources, expediency, electoral or political factors) then it is not being considered at all, by anyone.

Many national policy areas require long-term thinking and decisions for wider public good: examples from the case studies include drug rehabilitation and prevention, or

preventing violent extremism. These suffer if no-one is thinking seriously about the public interest. Long-term policy issues are also generally considered to be poorly handled and ‘kicked into the long grass’ by governments of different hues – for example energy security, infrastructure, pensions, or social care of the elderly. They often fare badly in international comparisons – notably, against those countries adopting less of an NPM approach to government.

‘Public interest’ has been supplanted by a belief that public good is served by aggregating individual benefits. The argument suggests that by acting professionally and ‘doing good’ for individual clients before them, public servants must - by definition - act in the public interest. Respondents demonstrated this view of their work because of many factors – increased individualism within wider society; a sense that public servants only have limited scope; a sense that government handles the bigger issues; a belief that wider issues are complex, nuanced, and beyond individual control. In both case studies partnerships received priorities, targets, funding requirements, processes and structures laid down by government: partnerships were to implement these efficiently and thus ‘do good’ in a micro-sense.

Public servants feel this is what government wants them to do - a clear trend and direction that policy dictated: in this respect, they are accurate. Successive governments have preached efficiency and customer service: aims that have intrinsically positive qualities. But pursued in ignorance of other factors they narrow thinking and horizons, limit timescales, infantilise professionals, and push public servants’ thinking into a single context of professional expertise towards individuals. The case studies demonstrated the partnerships’ limited innovation; the focus on trust between partners and an absence of trust from government; the emphasis on local and short-term results rather than wider or longer thinking.

The difficulty this trend creates is crystallised by a hypothetical question put to some respondents: they could help an individual, but only by damaging wider policy and undermining long-term notions such as equity, impartiality and consistency. Which would they choose? None had an answer and, as significantly, none had ever been asked to consider such a dilemma before.



How does PSE adapt to this new paradigm? It is possible that future definitions of PSE no longer includes 'public interest', because it does not exist in the previously-understood sense of the phrase – it has been replaced by the aggregation of individual interest. Evidence from the case study research suggests the traditional concept has gone forever: public servants no longer think of wider or deeper elements of public interest in considering their work. PSE does not exist as previously-constructed.

### ***3 Loyalty is to professionalism and individual clients***

Loyalty demonstrates motivations and priorities of public servants, and the political realities and day-to-day concerns of their work. Traditional views of PSE see loyalty as being primarily to the public interest – the previous section demonstrated that wider public interest no longer grips public servants.

Currently, public servants' loyalty is to work area and work content. There is strong professional pride and a commitment to a high-quality and efficient performance; but limited loyalty to organisation, or the organisation's role within wider society. Public servants care deeply about their clients, but in an individual or localised way. This care influences their motivation for entering, staying in, or changing jobs; but it undermines broader thinking, public interest, and potentially altruism and equity. Individual commitment from public servants is considerable; but it is individual to them and to clients. Public servants do not balance immediate individual client need against longer-term societal requirement: instead, attending to the former 'must' mean contributing to the latter.

Interviewees felt PSE became less visible the further an individual is from giving client service; implying management is less able to demonstrate PSE. Respondents considered that PSE was visible at the 'sharp end' of serving the public, not at senior management level. This may be cynicism or mistrust of management, but also reflects ideas of PSE around serving the individual. It is possible for management to reflect PSE: in wider and longer term thinking, or strategic decisions that aid service equity or public good. But the case studies do not demonstrate this: senior managers believed such concepts were government's responsibility, considered before policy was handed down.

The trend towards individualisation is partially counteracted by a socialization process that can occur within partnerships. Here, partnership structures can support PSE, enabling the socializing of more communal ideas than individuals would express alone. This socialization process was stronger in Derby City - where partnership working was a significant part of the working day (if not all of it) - than in Carmarthenshire, where partnership was a bolt-on' to normal working. Partnerships requiring positive choices to engage, and engage fully, were more likely to socialize an individual towards a particular culture and/or ethos. Respondents in Derby City felt socialization and the pressure of 'how we do things around here' more keenly than respondents in Carmarthenshire. Partnerships therefore contain the potential to encourage PSE; whether they do so depends partly on moving towards ever-closer partnership.

The theoretical dilemma raised in a hypothetical scenario - between responding to an individual client, and having regards to wider and longer-term societal implications - remains important. It is important because the dichotomy is real and relevant; important because it is seemingly not part of public service thinking. None of those questioned had considered this dilemma, nor had been asked to by others. Instead, the dilemma was avoided by considering the response to individual client needs, and nothing else.

Overall, individual views of where loyalty lies, and how PSE can be demonstrated, both imply an individualistic approach that ignores more communal elements of PSE. Public servants' commitment to 'helping people' or 'doing good' is not doubted: their individual and individualistic slant on how this is done, is the issue.

#### ***4 NPM: The undermining of trust***

Commentators consider many forms and directions for trust in both network governance and PSE – including trust of public services by government, trust of government by public services, trust between public services, trust of government by the public, or trust of public services by the public. In the case studies it is rather simpler. Interviewees were asked specifically about trust: for them, trust is an issue for inter-organisational development, or between public servants. Trust of, or towards, government is rarely mentioned, public trust practically never. Trust therefore reflects internal partnership dynamics; a barometer of efficiency within partnership and public services.

For PSE, this implies a different view about what constitutes their responsibilities on behalf of the public. It is seen as a duty to be efficient, effective and co-operative within organisational/partnership environments. It is not about long-term trust relationships with either public or government: this is reflected in the absence of accountability to the public, or of mechanisms for partnerships to influence government. Policy, targets and often processes are fed down from government: respondents see little meaningful consultation, or opportunity for public services to ‘feed in’ to government thinking. Respondents expressed frustration at the unintended consequences of national policy, which needed adjustment as a result. For example, Carmarthenshire had to reconfigure national requirements on tackling extremism, since with a small ethnic population the policy meant little to those enacting it. The lack of discussion about trust towards government reflects a perceived reality that there is little available.

Government lack of trust in public servants is demonstrated by NPM policies. The tone of government rhetoric (e.g. Tony Blair’s ‘scars on my back’ from public service reform) amplifies the messages – processes are paramount; efficiency and effectiveness are watch-words; what gets measured is what is important, and vice-versa. These messages undermine both trust and PSE: trust of public officials to ‘do the right thing’ and act for the public good is both intrinsic to PSE and undermined by NPM.

Further implications for PSE lie in co-operation and negotiation around sharing resources, and contractual issues. Partnership co-operation, and demonstration of PSE, has been easier in times of plenty, with partners offering time and opportunity cost contributions. Now, and increasingly, negotiations centre on a cash budget - buying in expertise, contracting services, commissioning work. Whatever other merits this has, it reduces the scope to demonstrate PSE because it reduces relationships to contracts and agreed terms; limits the capacity to step beyond agreed parameters; reduces trust and encourages work-to-rule; stresses compliance over trust; creates service provision inequities; attaches risk not reward to altruistic behaviour; and encourages thinking no longer than contract length and no wider than contract terms.

## ***5 The voluntary sector is different to the public sector***

Commentators note several differences between the PSE and a voluntary sector ethos: many were replicated in respondents' views. Depending on commissioning arrangements, the voluntary sector could avoid universality and equity of service; they could focus on service delivery and downgrade larger issues such as longer-term strategy, accountability to government or public, or political issues.

Such an approach might invoke the spirit of PSE, being more devoted to service delivery and less to political or organisational issues. Yet voluntary services avoid to some extent issues such as resource rationing, political expediencies, strategic thinking, sharing services and resources, a requirement for universality, dealing with issues over the long term, and providing security of provision. Instead they reflect immediate and client-focused service, not the full spectrum of PSE. Respondents suggested a wish to serve clients as part of the voluntary sector (with perceived reductions in 'politics' or 'bureaucracy'). This wish reflects PSE changing, towards an individualistic and professionalized approach.

The case studies do not support the notion of 'public sector ethos' whereby public sector workers act to retain status or power, not on the public's behalf. Some respondents noted a patrician attitude in deciding priorities with minimal public consultation; most responses indicated a commitment to helping the public, not a culture of convenience for service providers. Derby City, especially, demonstrated a quasi-organisational culture that focused on client needs: services were re-organised for this, and it was a commitment explicitly stated in interviews. The case studies suggest that partnership culture is crucial in protecting against a 'public sector ethos' - the closer the partnership, the more commitment generated outwards towards clients; the looser the partnership, the more staff entrench in individual sectors.

The CSPs and other public bodies exist in a fast-changing environment; boundaries between public, private and voluntary sectors are often opaque. They are no longer separate but overlapping and fused - theory needs to adjust to this new reality.

### **Section 3 Developing public policy: the future of the PSE**

The case studies show that PSE faces a daunting future in developing within current policy circumstances. The coalition is currently invoking altruism, in their attempt to boost volunteering within society (e.g. the 'Big Society'). But much of government policy prevents the emergence or sustaining of PSE: it is highly questionable that they assist greater altruism. For example, most aspects of NPM continue unaffected: the focus on reducing budgets has strengthened the importance of 'efficiency' over aspects such as public interest. Most of the government programme produces individualism, fragmented services, delivery based on contractual obligation, short-term planning, and continued infantilising of public service professionals. The case studies demonstrate that combining these elements with a renewed sense of public duty is impossible: practitioners attend to what is required and measured, and the immediate consequences of activity. If policy makers are genuine about increasing altruism, they need to re-shape every aspect of public policy to foster it. Otherwise, major aspects of PSE (e.g. wider thinking, concern for the public interest, innovation) will wither on the vine, and become an anachronism.

The research explored partnerships as network governance, the current place of PSE, and how the two might interact. It did so using two in-depth, detailed and specifically selected case studies of Community Safety Partnerships. These case studies showed that partnerships could be a positive benefit for maintaining and developing PSE. Partnerships offer potential for longer-term thinking about community-wide issues not individual concerns; they can encourage staff to think beyond their own work to how services can connect; they can encourage altruism and co-operation; they can foster universality and equity; they can build upon existing accountability processes. In short, they offer potential improvements in public service by being greater than the sum of their parts.

Partnerships are also an opportunity to study and observe the development of network governance. Partnerships can be autonomous units, given general policy guidance but left to innovate and adapt locally. They can integrate work to generate and reward mutual trust and interdependence, with government acceptance of the professional skills involved. They can be used to generate and prepare policy.

The case studies show CSPs have not evolved this way. They have been micro-managed by central government; given little say in policy development; expected to implement policy, structures and processes decided nationally. Some funding processes encouraged co-operation, only to be undermined by government departments retaining control, and by performance indicators that hindered what policies sought.

As a result of this evolution PSE has come under sustained pressure, even during partnership growth. Many aspects of PSE are undermined or obliterated within the partnerships. Why is this? PSE has altered for several reasons – the first two directly concerned with partnerships.

Firstly, how government created partnerships did not fit well with network governance theory. Legislation and guidance created a piecemeal and ad-hoc introduction, with conflicting demands and insufficient structures. Agreement on broad principles between government and local public services was followed by disagreement about details. A benign financial environment papered over cracks, but in more difficult times they are becoming clear. In undermining many aspects of network governance, implementation damaged the same aspects of PSE - trust, accountability and autonomy.

Secondly, government combined new partnerships aimed at long-term solutions, with short-term process-led policies of NPM: the research in the case studies demonstrated the degree of overlap. While the latter were partially (often poorly) introduced, they had significant impact. They developed a rhetoric of mistrust, and short-term thinking about process and ‘measurables’; thus they distorted approaches and actions, and undermined the concept of partnerships as solving community-wide issues. For PSE, this directly impacted upon autonomy, accountability, wider thinking and longer-term thinking - significant underpinnings of PSE. Despite their potential, how partnerships are governed has reduced PSE, not supported it.

Thirdly a more consumerist, individualistic and customer-oriented philosophy has emerged in the public services, and its users; the case study research shows how accountability to community is no longer paramount. This new orientation cements popular ideas that public services should respond as private sector organisations do: they are not seen as intrinsically different. Commitment is now to individual endeavour,

satisfying individual clients or client groups. What is lost is the wider sense of community and interconnectivity. This new commitment is seen in both case studies. Respondents valued professional treatment of those before them, within their client base and their immediate area. They did not consider wider or longer-term implications.

Fourthly, government activity pushes in the direction of further voluntary sector involvement ('big society'); more commissioning and contracts; budget management to secure 'choice' and competition. These all split formerly communal services and render them fragmented and disparate. So, too, does the thinking about them. PSE concepts such as universal provision and equity of service, founder against individual choice and flexibility of delivery. The two sides are not automatically incompatible, but they are presented as a dichotomy: decisions follow such presentation.

Fifthly, the clearest change is the absence of wider or longer thinking by public servants. Potential dilemmas that balance wider community needs against individual client requirements are not on the radar. Front line staff do not discuss them, or view them as relevant. Senior managers have abrogated upwards, assuming such thinking to be conducted by government. The manager's job, instead, is effective policy implementation, not considering wider implications for public interest. This infantilises senior management, and reduces the importance and influence of PSE.

Overall, current attitudes do not reflect PSE. The case studies demonstrate over and over what is missing: there is no wider or longer-term thinking, no consideration of wider public interest. Altruism and commitment remain in the interviewees, but towards individuals not society. In organisational terms, the research shows trust has eroded, replaced by a compliance culture that adheres to contractual terms and little more. What remains, the thesis tells us, is clearly a willingness to work hard at a professional job, a keen interest in 'doing good'. But the case studies show this operates in a narrower sphere; loyalty is to work content not wider society. This specific loyalty reflects societal attitude changes outside the workplace, but it is mainly an inevitable and deliberate consequence of government policy and rhetoric for at least 30 years.

**What this thesis research clearly identifies** is that while PSE still exists in some shape within modern public services, it is struggling. Moves towards genuine network

governance would enhance its chances, but at present, it is doomed to suffer a death of a thousand cuts. This research demonstrates PSE's inherent difficulties, and limited chances of resurrection.



## Appendix A – Interview Questions

*Begin with ice-breaker general questions about the interviewee's past work history, etc.*

*Q1 Thinking about the Community Safety Partnership, can you explain to me how the partnership is structured – how the groups connect to each other, who is responsible for what, and so on?*

**Prompts** – boundaries, shared responsibilities, degree of interdependence

**Looking for** – evidence of who does what, how tight or loose the partnership working is, the degree of independence among partners, how common the understanding of structures is between interviewees

*Q2 Who decides on the targets for the partnership and what resources are applied to it? How is this audited?*

**Prompts** – resource sharing, committing money/time, local decision-making, audit trails

**Looking for** – evidence of extent to which partnership makes its own decisions, degree of central government involvement, degree of pressure from audit/inspection

*Q3 How much of what you do for the partnership do you think would be covered in other ways if the partnership was not there? Do you help to develop new policies and ideas, or are you implementing ideas from somewhere else?*

**Prompts** – new initiatives, capacity, identifying new challenges/issues to tackle, impact of other factors/changes

**Looking for** – evidence of how much of partnership is 'new' and how much would have happened anyway, partnership contribution compared to mainstream activities, role of partnership as consultee/policy developer (as opposed to implementing decisions taken outside the partnership)

*Q4 How do you resolve conflicts or issues within the partnership? Who supplies the information you use for decision-making?*

**Prompts** – disagreements, who has authority/priority, information reliability/integrity/availability, negotiation processes

**Looking for** – evidence of how much interaction and trust is involved, who has the information/knowledge/power in reality, how much negotiation occurs and under what circumstances, and do the partnership behave like a classic network?

*Q5 Thinking about your work within the partnership, do you see what you do fitting into an idea of ‘the public interest’? If so, how?*

**Prompts** – community, citizenship, the ‘greater good’, loyalty

**Looking for** – evidence of partnership working aimed at a wide community (not narrow sectional or organisational interest), who the interviewee feels loyalty/responsibility to in partnership working

*Q6 Can you describe, in the context of your work in the partnership, what qualities you think public servants should bring to their role?*

**Prompts** – transparency, integrity, neutrality, consistency

**Looking for** – evidence that the PSE attributes are observed and/or considered in the conduct of partnership working, evidence that it has been mentioned in planning/carrying out of partnership work

*Q7 If you had to describe the philosophy of what you do in the partnership, how would you describe it?*

**Prompts** – overriding idea behind it, collective, altruism

**Looking for** – evidence of wider perspective and deeper thought processes than mere implementation, evidence of who the partnership work is for, evidence that there is an overarching approach rather than pragmatism

*Q8 Can you describe what your own organisation stands for, and how it has developed that stance?*

**Prompts** – why the organisation exists, who it serves, how it serves them

**Looking for** – ideas about the organisational culture, the history of that culture, whether the culture includes notions associated with PSE

*Q9 What drew you to work for this organisation initially? Comparing your attitudes to those of your colleagues, would you say they are similar or different?*

**Prompts** – vocation, selection, adaptation

**Looking for** – evidence that elements of a PSE existed in this individual prior to selection for their job, evidence concerning socialization/self-selection debate, evidence of power of the culture over the individual

*Q10 Looking at your organisation, how would you compare it to other organisations in the partnership in terms of its approach to the public?*

**Prompts** – similar/different, culture, attitudes, approach

**Looking for** – evidence of degree of institutional cohesion within the partnership, evidence of degree of homogeneity/heterogeneity in partnership

*Q11 When did you first hear, or become aware of, the idea of a 'public service ethos'?*

**Prompt** – wider society, the 'public good', who we are here to serve

**Looking for** – evidence of an awareness of PSE and where/from whom this came, evidence of impact of culture and context

*Q12 Thinking about that concept, how do you think it has changed for your organisation since the partnership was created?*

**Prompts** – public service, independence/autonomy, barriers, opportunities, improvements, problems

**Looking for** – evidence of how the PSE has been altered/fragmented, evidence of what is perceived to have changed and influenced the PSE

*Q13 Do you think your organisation displays that kind of ethos? If so, in what ways?*

**Prompts** – examples, wider public good, organisational culture, short-term versus long-term

**Looking for** – evidence of organisations explicitly invoking a wider, deeper, longer-term basis of what they do, evidence of sacrificing or making politically difficult decisions for the bigger societal good

*Q14 Do you think the notion of a public service ethos has real impact, or is it an excuse, or plausible defence, for public sector workers facing challenge?*

**Prompts** – hiding, covering up, self-justification, convenient explanation

**Looking for** – challenge to a passive acceptance of the concept, attempt to make the interviewee think more deeply and challenge basic assumptions, questioning of implicit notions or ‘telling the interviewer what he wants to hear’

*Q15 How do you think the ethos of the public sector will develop in the future?*

**Prompts** – change of government, new thinking, new challenges, public, media, voluntary sector

**Looking for** – thoughts about the future that reveal ideas about the past/present, evidence of how the ethos is seen to be affected by politics, resources, outside influences

## **Appendix B - Interviewees**

### ***Carmarthenshire***

Area Housing Manager (Council)  
Head of Public Protection (Council)  
Police Inspector (Police)  
Crime & Disorder Co-ordinator (Police)  
Head of Transport Engineering (Council)  
Community Safety Station Manager (Fire)  
Road Safety Manager (Council)  
Road Safety Officer (Police)  
Community Safety Manager (Council)  
Senior Youth Officer (Council)  
Media Officer (Council)  
Community Safety Constable (Police)  
Civil Enforcement Supervisor (Council)  
Drug Rehabilitation Manager (contracted out service)  
Drug Referral Officer (Health)  
Substance Misuse Officer (Council)

### ***Derby City***

Anti-Social Behaviour Manager (Partnership)  
Senior Neighbourhood Manager (Partnership)  
Crime Prevention Manager (Partnership)  
Acting Director, Derby City CSP (Partnership)  
Lead Officer, Community Cohesion (Council)  
Head of Services – Anti-Social Behaviour/Projects (Partnership)  
Drug Intervention Team Manager (Health)  
Head of Service – Drug Strategy (Health)  
Head of Service – Resources and Intelligence (Partnership)  
Senior Neighbourhood Manager (Partnership)  
Head of Service – Substance Misuse (Partnership)  
Head of Service – Neighbourhood Services (Partnership)

Commissioning Manager (Partnership)

Head of Service – Youth Offending (Youth Services)

Domestic and Sexual Violence Unit Manager (Partnership)

Overview and Scrutiny Co-ordination Officer (Council)

Senior Research and Information Officer (Partnership)

Probation Partnership Officer (Probation)

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